THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 1897.

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THE WEEK.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: AT HOME.

LORD SALISBURY presided at a house dinner of the Junior Constitutional Club on Tuesday evening. Although he declared that the moment was ill-fitted for a discussion of foreign politics, he referred at some length to the question of Greece. The Sultan, he said, had yielded to the pressure of the six Powers, and more particularly to that of Russia, and had agreed to an armistice, thus enabling negotiations to be carried on without a further sacrifice of human life. The difficulties in the way of those negotiations were, however, very great. This war was peculiar in one respect, inasmuch as it could not be left, as most wars were, simply to work out its natural result in accordance with the strength of the two parties concerned. Europe could not allow Christian communities to pass from Christian rulers to the government of the Sultan. This declaration, we observe, was received with loud applause. Proceeding, Lord Salisbury declared that Greece could not expect on any mere grounds of sympathy to escape without penalty from the position in which she had placed herself. Referring to the telegram from members of the House of Commons to the King of the Greeks, he stigmatised it as "a disgrace" to that assembly, and declared that those who signed it were guilty of the blood which had been shed in consequence of the false hopes which they had excited among the Greeks.

THE House of Commons was engaged on Monday with the second reading debate on the Workmen's Compensation Bill. An amendment moved by Mr. Drage, declaring that no Bill would be satisfactory which did not provide for the prevention of accidents as well as for compensation, led to a debate which revealed a curious state of feeling in the House. It showed that whilst many Tories disliked the measure, it was popular with the great bulk of Liberals, especially with those representing the working classes. The debate was continued on Tuesday, when the same state of things was witnessed, Mr. Asquith and other prominent Liberals accepting the Bill as being a step in the right direction, though there were points upon which it required to be amended. Mr. Chamberlain made one of his aggressive and unnecessarily contentious harangues in favour of the measure, evidently being anxious to raise a party conflict over it. The good sense of the House defeated his attempt, and the Bill was read a second time without opposition.

THE House of Lords was occupied on Monday in continuing a debate begun in the previous week upon Lord Dunraven's proposal for an inquiry into the question of our troops in India and their sufferings from contagious diseases. The motion was ultimately withdrawn, but not until a debate that was eminently instructive had taken place. Lord Lansdowne, as Secretary of State for War, declared that the Government meant to enforce the regulations prescribed by the Secretary of State for India in his recent despatch, and Lord Kimberley expressed his hearty approval of this decision. It is time, indeed, that Ministers and Parliament should deal with this grave question in a spirit befitting the terrible nature of the evils connected with it. At this moment the national honour and the national safety are at stake through our criminal folly in exposing multitudes of young boys not only to the temptations of cantonment life in a tropical climate, but to the fearful risks consequent upon the reckless disregard of all sanitary laws in the management of the Indian bazaars. We have no wish to question the sincerity of those who dwell exclusively upon the "moral" side of this ugly question. We admit that it has a moral aspect; but that moral aspect is more complex than the opponents of the old Contagious Diseases Acts acknowledge; whilst there is also a physical side which it is the duty of the Government to consider, and consider seriously. We do not desire to see the old Contagious Diseases Acts restored in their integrity—they unquestionably were open to grave objections, and were repugnant to the moral sense of a large part of the community; but to do nothing, and to leave a hideous scourge to pollute the whole race without let or hindrance, because in some cases it is the penalty paid for sensual indulgence, is a policy which cannot be justified on any moral ground whatever, and which seems to be absolutely opposed to the teaching of Christianity. Our legislators, we trust, will deal with this grave question with an earnest determination to do their duty by those for whose welfare, both physical and moral, they are so largely responsible.

ON Wednesday afternoon the House of Commons rejected by 278 votes to 154 a Bill for the reform of Welsh land tenure promoted by the Welsh Liberal Members. The Bill, which was not nearly so drastic as its Irish archetype, proposed to establish Land Courts in Wales as a sort of appendage to the County Courts, but presided over by a special agricultural judge. These Courts were to fix fair rents on the Irish model, and to ensure the tenant freedom of cultivation (subject to provisions

intended to prevent deterioration of the land) and security of tenure for periods of five years at a time. But provision was made for voluntary agreements between landlord and tenant, and for registration of these free contracts as orders of Court. Much stress was laid by the advocates of the Bill on the "land-hunger" now prevalent in Wales and likely to be prevalent so long as half a million of the population speaks only Welsh; on the extreme insecurity of tenure which is now usual, and has been usual since competition began to displace custom and heredity; and on the uncertainty, caused by the variation in the amount of rent returned at rent-day, of the actual sum the tenant will have to pay. However, the Ministerialists are not well disposed just now to the policy involved in the Irish Land Acts, and English owners of derelict farms are convinced that people who can compete for land cannot be very badly off; so the Bill was rejected, after some amusing, but hardly relevant, criticism of the Report of the Welsh Land Commission. Something was said of the danger of disturbing "the good feeling between landlord and tenant." But the soreness of the Welsh tenant on land questions is one of the things which most strongly impress the Sassenach visitor.

On Thursday evening the House of Commons passed the third reading of the Necessitous Board Schools Bill, not without emphatic protests from members on both sides of the House as to the inadequacy of the relief given by it, especially in the case of small rural school boards. The Financial Bill then passed its second reading, after a somewhat desultory debate. Mr. James Lowther moved an amendment proposing to widen the area of taxation—a proposal which was avowedly Protectionist, but was so worded that it could be supported on other than Protectionist grounds, and was so supported by Mr. Knox and (to some extent) by Mr. Lough. The amendment was eventually withdrawn. A more interesting feature of the debate was the treatment of the death duties. Complaints as to the hardships incidentally inflicted by them (which were very effectively put, though with considerable exaggeration, by Captain Pretyman) gave Sir William Harcourt an excellent opportunity both of justifying his own work and of suggesting an alternative Budget for the present year. He pointed out that, instead of frittering away the surplus in relieving landlords and subscribers to Church schools, the duty on tea might have been reduced by 2d. per pound and the income tax by 1d. in the £. That would have appealed to a considerably larger number of Ministerialists in the country than the class relief which the Ministry has attempted. But the Ministry has not yet learned that Toryism, to be successful, must also be democratic.

It was arranged some days ago that last night was to be devoted in the House of Commons to a debate on the South African question. On Tuesday, however, Mr. Balfour, in reply to Sir William Harcourt, stated that it would be inexpedient, in view of impending negotiations, to have a discussion on South African affairs at so early a date, and he therefore proposed to substitute the Irish for the South African votes. Sir William Harcourt acquiesced in this arrangement. It is generally understood that important negotiations are proceeding between Mr. Leyds, the Secretary to the Transvaal Government, and the Colonial Office, and that these have reached a stage which gives rise to the hope that the questions at issue between this country and the Boer Republic will be satisfactorily adjusted.

The South Africa Committee had a very important meeting on Tuesday, when Dr. Harris was recalled and examined upon the telegrams recently handed over to the Committee by the Cable Company. The telegrams themselves, though they do not represent all those which passed before the raid, contain some remarkable sentences. Thus, on the 4th of November, 1895, Dr. Harris, telegraphing to Mr. Rhodes, said, "I have spoken open E. Fairfield." Upon this Dr. Harris was severely cross-examined. His explanation was that he had told Mr. Fairfield that one of the reasons why Mr. Rhodes was anxious for a Protectorate was that he considered it imperative to have a British force on the borders, so that in the event of disturbances at Johannesburg he could be in a position, if he deemed it right, to use that force. At the same time, the witness declared emphatically that Mr. Fairfield had no foreknowledge of Dr. Jameson's raid, or of any preparations for it. Upon this point, it will be remembered, we have already something better than the testimony of Dr. Harris—the explicit declaration of Mr. Fairfield himself. Mr. Chamberlain produced a letter of Mr. Fairfield's giving a different account of the interview from that given by the witness.

One of the most remarkable features of the South African telegrams is the reference which they contain to the relations between the leaders in the raid and certain agents of the *Times*. The chief of these agents is a lady who is well and favourably known in contemporary journalism, Miss Flora Shaw. This lady has been for years a regular contributor to the *Times* on questions connected with the colonies. She travelled round the world as the representative of that journal some years since, and contributed to its columns a series of letters, dealing with the questions into which she inquired in the various colonies, of remarkable interest and ability. In justice to her, as well as in explanation of her prominent position in connection with the *Times*, these facts should be stated. It is evident from the telegrams that Miss Shaw was regarded by Mr. Rhodes and his friends as the authorised representative of the *Times*, and that they expected to be able to influence that journal through her. It remains to be seen what statement she and the *Times* will have to make with regard to the telegrams in which she plays so prominent a part.

The Women's Liberal Federation, which has been holding its annual Conference this week, has given its general endorsement to the Liberal programme and policy with an emphasis which is very satisfactory to Liberals in general, even if they do not sympathise with the whole programme of the Federation. Of the specially significant items of the proceedings we may notice the emphatic and almost unanimous opinion informally expressed in favour of the co-education of the sexes—an opinion which contrasts oddly with the cries of alarm which, as we write, are proceeding from the less liberal members of the University of Cambridge—and the equally emphatic protests against restrictive regulations being applied to women that are applicable, but not applied to the male sex. The Federation congratulated itself, in a more sanguine spirit than the facts permit, on the second reading of the Women's Suffrage Bill. The Women's Liberal Unionist Association, we observe, passed a resolution requesting the Government to arrange for a reassembling of the House of Commons on the day after the Jubilee, in order to go into Committee on the Bill. Liberals may at least congratulate themselves that women on their side know considerably more about practical politics than such a resolution implies.

The Vestry Elections, which have taken place in London this and last week, have attracted more attention than usual, but less than they deserve.

The Progressives have not swept the field, but they have made a very satisfactory net gain of 31 seats (69 Progressive gains against 38 Moderate). Sixteen of these gains are in Wandsworth and ten in Shoreditch, but the rest have been largely made in the West End of London, usually regarded by the Progressives as hopeless, or nearly so; and they have been made in spite of the allurements of the Moderate plan for incorporating the various parishes or groups of them as separate cities—which might be expected to seduce local magnates into supporting a policy which would magnify their (possible) offices into mayoralties and councillorships, and relieve them of part of the taxation which now goes to benefit poorer districts. Even Westminster, which might seem a hopeless district, shows some Progressive vestrymen and a reduction of the Moderate majority in the bye-election for the County Council held on Thursday of this week. London is, as Sir William Harcourt said on Wednesday night at the National Liberal Club, only a neglected field, not a sterile one; and when properly worked by Liberals and Progressives, it will give a good Liberal return once more.

A VERY remarkable occurrence took place on Saturday at the Snaefell mine in the Isle of Man. Several persons, it will be remembered, were killed in this mine by an explosion. On Saturday Dr. Le Neve Foster, the Government inspector, accompanied by a party of workpeople, descended the mine in the hope of recovering the body of one of the men who had perished. They had got within sight of the body when the poisonous gas lodged in the mine after the explosion began to take effect on them. They prepared to retreat, and one of their number entered the cage in order to ascend to the surface. Through some accident the cage became jammed in the shaft, and for more than an hour it could not be used. During that time the party below remained in the poisonous atmosphere, which affected them with steadily increasing force. They gave up all hope of escape, and Dr. Foster, besides penning farewell messages to his family, made continuous notes as to the effects of the gas upon himself and his fellow-sufferers. They were almost at the point of death when the cage was released and they were brought to the surface. The incident is by no means unprecedented in the annals of mining, but the circumstances, and the great coolness and courage of Dr. Foster, render the case a remarkable one.

ABROAD.

THE War in the East is over, and the prospects of Greece as we write are less gloomy than they appeared to be at the beginning of the week. The Powers, indeed—stimulated by the knowledge that the Sultan is likely to give them a good deal of trouble—seem likely to behave towards the unhappy little kingdom with unexpected consideration; though it may be well to moderate our hopes. The monstrous terms of peace proposed by the Porte were published on Monday, and were received in every capital in Europe with indignant derision. A war indemnity of ten million pounds, Turkish, to be paid by a State which was bankrupt before the war began; the retrocession of Thessaly to the authors of the Armenian atrocities, in violation of a principle which has become part of the public law of Europe; the abolition of the capitulations, whereby Greeks in Turkey would be placed at the mercy of the Turkish officials; and an extradition treaty which would enable the Turk to take vengeance on the Macedonians who have unsuccessfully struggled for their freedom, together constituted a proposal absolutely inadmissible even by the pedants of diplomacy, and both the Czar and the German Emperor put strong pressure on the Sultan to accept the armistice at once. Germany, however, might have acted more promptly than she did. The action of the Powers will undoubtedly involve the Sultan in a good deal of difficulty with large and influential sections of his own subjects—which is a good thing both for the Christian population of the empire and for Europe at large; though perhaps the weakening of his power may be counterbalanced by the increased support he will obtain from Russia. And if, as seems probable, the finances of Greece are subjected to European supervision, that also may be a good thing for the Greeks in the end—provided always that the Greek Government is able to enforce the measures which the controlling authority suggests.

THE war, unfortunately, has gone on while the negotiations for an armistice were pending, with disastrous results for the Greeks. Another invasion of Epirus, undertaken to obtain a set-off for Greece against the Turkish successes in Thessaly, and cut short by the armistice, resulted only in further waste of life; and the Greeks, after successfully maintaining their position at Domoko on Monday and inflicting heavy losses on the attacking forces, were outflanked and compelled to fall back on the Phourka Pass, leaving Colonel Smolenitz's troops on the extreme right at Almyro on the Gulf of Volo isolated and in great danger. These latter have been able to make their way by sea to Stylida, the port of Lamia; but early on Tuesday morning the Greeks were dislodged from the Phourka Pass and compelled to fall back on Thermopylæ. The armistice was only concluded on Wednesday afternoon, and fighting went on up to that time. The sufferings of the Turks in Thessaly have clearly been severe, and now that they have reached the Maliac Gulf their difficulties would be enormously increased if the war were resumed. But it is hardly likely that the negotiations will break down now.

THE removal, as an earnest of the submission of Greece to Europe, of the Greek troops from Crete, does not seem to have improved matters much in the island. The insurgents refuse to lay down their arms until the Turkish troops are withdrawn, and we cannot wonder; and they have cut off the water-supply of Canea. Moreover, the Montenegrin gendarmerie are on the worst possible terms with the Mohammedan population; and the prospect of a termination of the international occupation seems to be extremely remote.

IT has frequently been pointed out during the last few weeks that the successes of the Turks in Greece might cause a dangerous excitement in the Mohammedan world. The French seem to have been verifying the truth of this in Algeria. We hear that it has been necessary to institute searches for arms and ammunition, and that a number of natives have been disarmed; and also—what is more significant—that Kabyles who can read French have been officially cautioned not to translate the telegrams announcing Turkish victories to their co-religionists, and especially to refrain from accompanying them by inflammatory comments. It is to be hoped that during the peace negotiations these facts will not be overlooked by the French Foreign Office.

WE comment elsewhere on the crisis produced by the Prussian reactionaries through pressure on the unfortunate Imperial Chancellor, in German and Prussian politics, and the probable effect of the passage by the Reichstag of the so-called Emergency Bill. Here we may note that Tuesday's debate on this Bill was marked by a very brilliant and daring

IF housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

speech of the veteran Liberal leader, Herr Richter, in which he appealed most effectively, though covertly, to the anti-Prussian feeling of members from other States, and referred, decorously though not obscurely, to the despotic tendencies displayed by the Emperor and the consequent decline of loyalty. Even a Conservative, Herr von Kardoff, had previously hinted nearly as much. The National Liberals, it is observed, generally voted for the Bill. Their opinions will carry more weight with the less bigoted of the reactionaries than those of any other party; and as it is rather a demonstration of opinion than a demonstration of voting strength that we expect to be most effective in averting the crisis, we trust they will express those opinions freely. The reactionaries would not mind firing on Social Democrats; they would think twice before estranging National Liberals—even though the party is disorganised and dissolving. Its members are so eminently respectable.

THERE have been fresh rumours this week of a coming American intervention in Cuba. President McKinley is believed to have a policy in the question; but, so far, his action is limited to proposing to give assistance to those American citizens in Cuba who have suffered in consequence of the war—a step at which Spain has not taken umbrage. Jingo attempts to couple with this proposal a recognition of Cuban belligerency have failed in both houses. Still, considering how many of these distressed Americans must be born Cubans who have adopted American nationality to secure those advantages of protection to life and property which they could not feel sure of obtaining from the Spanish Government, the President might have done more. Possibly, business interests may have delayed further action until the tariff is passed. On the other hand, it is reported that the Jingo Republicans propose to revenge themselves for the President's moderation by refusing to vote the tariff, which will effectually prolong the present financial depression; and if the Behring Sea question is to be reopened, there will be more Jingo demonstrations and less prospect of economic improvement. We do not object to the end in view, but the Russo-American agreement, by which it is proposed to attain it, is not the right way to do so.

LITERATURE, etc.

MR. GLADSTONE'S "Later Gleanings, Theological and Ecclesiastical," published this week by Mr. John Murray, close with the "Soliloquium," written last year in anticipation of the Papal decision in the validity of Anglican Orders, to which is appended a very remarkable Postscript, dated at Cannes on March 26th last, and reviewing the result of that inquiry in relation to the religious conditions of the age. This age has been, Mr. Gladstone thinks, "what may be rudely termed an Armageddon age"; or rather, a period of marshalling the forces on both sides for some decisive encounter. And the dangers to the Christian cause, in his view, lie partly in the disunion among the Christian forces, partly in the increase in material comforts and the liking for them, "which throws a heavy weight into the scale, wherein things seen and temporal are weighed against things unseen and eternal," partly in the decay of "traditional Christianity," which, though inadequate *per se*, affords "a holding ground" for the individual soul.

Now, in spite of this disunion, Mr. Gladstone maintains the revival of religious influences which this century has seen has produced a certain tendency towards unity and maintained a distinct element, common to all the Churches, of Christian belief. But this tendency towards essential unity has received no sort of encouragement from the Roman Church. She has aggravated the difficulties of other Christians in regard to her by laying down fresh articles of faith; and now the Bull rejecting the validity of Anglican orders "breathes in every line the sentiment, All ye who covet union, look for it anywhere except to Rome." In short, she stands out once more as the great reactionist. We cannot ourselves accept every detail of Mr. Gladstone's sketch as accurate, either as to the battlefield of Armageddon—"battle" is hardly the right metaphor for the nineteenth-century search for a creed—or the dangers of material prosperity, which we believe becomes less attractive as it becomes more familiar. But the Postscript is of extreme interest, as the retrospects of veterans always have been, from the days of Kephalus in Plato's Republic downward; and is specially interesting as coming from one whose early training and predilections have been tempered by contact with Nonconformity.

THE *Cornhill Magazine* for June contains a paper entitled "Some Memories of the Queen's Childhood and Marriage," by Lady Jane Ellice, one of the three surviving bridesmaids of the Queen. In an Anniversary Study on "The Battle of Sluis," Mr. Laird Clowes emphasises the claims of Edward III. to be regarded as the foremost of England's early naval heroes; while the visit of the King of Siam has prompted Mr. Percy Cross Standing to record his impressions of that monarch and his surroundings. Mr. Pemberton-Grund continues his studies of the "Duels of all Nations," the present instalment being devoted to those of Italy, Spain and Russia, Mr. Horace G. Hutchinson writes on "The Modern Pentathlum," Mr. A. J. Butler recalls his experiences of the Commune during a flying visit to Paris in June, 1871, and Mr. Fred J. Crowe replies to Mr. Kegan Paul's article on Freemasonry. The number also contains the first of a series of Tales from the Dramatists, on the lines of Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, the subject chosen being "The Witch of Edmonton"; and a set of humorous verses on the burning question of Degrees for Women at Cambridge by Mr. Owen Seaman, entitled "Quis pro Dominâ?"

OBITUARY.

THE DOWAGER DUCHESS OF ATHOLE had been Mistress of the Robes under the last Liberal Ministry, and was on terms of personal intimacy with her Majesty.—The Earl of Hardwicke was a Cambridgeshire magnate, who had served in the Indian Mutiny and sat in the House of Commons, and was well-known in the world—or worlds—of sport.—Lord Justice Barry was one of the most eminent of Irish jurists. His name is associated in particular with the Land Act of 1870, of which he was the chief framer; and he was Liberal M.P. for Dungarvan from 1865 to 1868.—Mr. William Wickham, Conservative member for the Petersfield Division of Hants, had edited the Life and Correspondence of his namesake and relative, the colleague of William Pitt.—The Hon. Sir W. J. Clarke, Bart., whose designation combines a Colonial with an Imperial distinction, was a prominent Victorian whose public services and munificent contributions to the charities, the public works, and especially the defence of his adopted country, had earned him a baronetcy of the United Kingdom.—Mr. J. H. Raper had been for many years a prominent official of the United Kingdom Alliance.

EUROPE AND GREECE.

THE European Concert is now upon its trial in good earnest. It has had very much of its own way so far in the diplomatic management of the crisis in the East. Now it will have to justify the

confidence that has been reposed in it or lose that confidence for ever. By its interposition — undoubtedly a wise and beneficent interposition—the war between Greece and Turkey has been summarily stopped; the beaten Greeks, powerless to act for themselves, have left their fate in its hands, and it rests for the moment with it to determine the future. Those of us who have hitherto supported the Concert because it undoubtedly stood between us and the catastrophe of a great war, and also because no one has suggested anything else to take its place, look anxiously to its future proceedings in the hope that our faith in its wisdom and its efficacy may be justified. If we are to be disappointed in our hopes, we shall be compelled to admit that, whatever mistakes may have been committed by those who urged Greece forward on her ruinous adventure, our own mistake has been hardly less serious. We have trusted to the six great Powers of Europe not merely to prevent the outbreak of war amongst themselves but to secure the interests of civilisation and humanity in the East. We have now to learn whether our trust is or is not to be justified. So far as Lord Salisbury's speech on Tuesday is concerned we are glad to note that whatever its faults of expression may be, and these were obvious enough, it is perfectly sound upon the chief question which is at issue between the Christian world and the Sultan. Nothing can be clearer than the Prime Minister's statement that this Government and the other Governments of Europe will not allow any portion of Greek territory which has been over-run by the Turkish troops in the late campaign to be permanently annexed to the Sultan's dominions. This decision accords with the universal feeling prevalent, not merely in England, but on the Continent. We cannot regard Abdul Hamid in the light in which a conqueror in a campaign is generally regarded. By his own vile deeds he has put himself outside the pale of humanity, and nothing will seem to justify the acquiescence of the Great Powers in his acquisition of the ordinary fruits of a victorious campaign. He has won Thessaly by the sword, but in view of his infamous character he cannot be allowed to retain it. We are glad to find that upon this point Lord Salisbury was as explicit as anyone could have wished him to be, and we are specially glad that in dealing with it he spoke not only for this country but for the other Powers of Europe also.

But it is not enough that we should feel assured as to the deliverance of Greek territory from the domination of the Sultan's hordes. Greece is something more than a geographical expression. The name stands in the minds of most Englishmen not merely for a State or a nation, but for a cause. Our Constantinople correspondent, in the letter we print on another page, which is written with the eloquence that springs from a full heart and a full mind, reminds us of the undoubted fact that Greece represents, and represents almost alone, the living forces of civilisation and Christianity in the East of Europe. To allow it to be crushed would be to allow the sacred torch of liberty to be quenched for ever so far as that corner of the world is concerned. It would mean that the heroic struggle which has been carried on for more than sixty years with the applauding sympathy of all civilised mankind had ended in utter and irremediable defeat, and that all the forces which make for good in the world had been compelled to yield to the victorious forces of evil. We cannot bring ourselves to believe that this is possible. If it were to come to pass, Great Britain at all events would be covered with undying infamy, and the name of the statesman whose fate it was to govern our destinies at such a moment, would be made shameful for ever. There ought to be no misunderstanding upon one point. If we allow Greece to be crushed, if we leave her with her territory intact, but with her manhood destroyed, we hand over the south-east of Europe to forces which are absolutely opposed to English ideas, and to English interests. We leave the inheritance of the Ottoman Empire to a different race from that of the Greeks, and to the representatives of principles with which we cannot have any real sympathy. It is notorious that there is a rival to Greece and to Greek ideas in the struggle for that inheritance. Russia has a *protégé* whom she wishes to substitute for Greece. Her desire is, that the Slavonic races of the Balkan Peninsula may take the place of the Greeks in the future destinies of south-eastern Europe. If her wish should be realised, and if the Slav should succeed in establishing himself in the position of the Sick Man's heir, the whole future of south-eastern Europe will be wrested from the grasp of men who stand for freedom and Western civilisation, and transferred to the representatives and the instruments of the great autocracy of the Muscovites. What that would mean, so far as the selfish interests of Great Britain are concerned, it is hardly necessary to say. But something of still greater value than the interests of our commerce, or even of our political ascendency, would be sacrificed if Russia were to succeed in this design of hers. The cause of human freedom would be vanquished, and so far as that priceless portion of the world is concerned, the cause of despotism would triumph.

It is for Englishmen to say whether they will permit this. Lord Salisbury spoke with his customary acerbity of the follies and blunders which have been committed by the Greeks and their friends, and was loud and rough in his declaration that the nation which has erred, even though it has erred in a noble cause, must pay the penalty of its failure. Most of us learned long ago that Lord Salisbury's bark is worse than his bite, and we cannot believe that his anger against the Greeks represents his real frame of mind. But even if it did, the Prime Minister cannot ignore the fact that our own interests, as well as the interests of civilisation and freedom, are bound up with those of the Greeks. It is possible that he might leave the Greeks to their fate if that fate concerned themselves alone; but seeing that all the interests and the sympathies of this country and all the principles we profess to cherish are involved in it, he dare not allow Greece to be deprived of her manhood among the nations and left to perish miserably. For our part we confess that we cannot bring ourselves to believe that what has happened recently has been the outcome of a deliberate plot on the part of the despotic Powers of Europe to lure Greece to her ruin. Our Constantinople correspondent believes it and says so, and we are aware that his opinion is shared by many others. We have no proof offered to us, however, of the existence of this diabolical intrigue, and we prefer to believe that it does not exist. But whatever may be the truth on this point, the fact remains that the practical effacement of Greece as one of the living members of the body-politic of Europe would be one of the gravest misfortunes which could happen to the cause of civilisation generally, and to the special interests of Great Britain in particular. This being the case, it is clearly the duty of this country to do everything it can to prevent this crowning disaster following upon the unhappy and tragical sequence of events which we have witnessed in Eastern Europe during the last three years. After all, Great Britain, although we are sometimes apparently forgetful of the fact, is still one of the Great Powers of the world. At this moment she is supreme, without a rival, on one all-important

element. If she refuses to allow Greece to be consumed in the furnace of Turkish enmity and European intrigue, her veto will be effectual. We began by saying that the European Concert was upon its trial in earnest. It would be still more accurate to say that Lord Salisbury's claim to be regarded as a patriot and a statesman was upon its trial. By what he accomplishes now we shall know, and posterity will know, how to estimate him in both characters.

THE DECLINE OF PARLIAMENT.

IT is understood that Parliament will be prorogued before the end of July. Some say the beginning of August; but the earlier date is the more probable. The Whitsuntide holidays, immediately followed by the celebration of the Jubilee, will mean for many Members, perhaps for the majority, the beginning of the Recess. This, it may be said, is only, after all, the normal state of things. Parliament met a fortnight earlier. It will rise a fortnight earlier. Why not? That, however, is an incomplete account of the situation. The months of June and July are usually the most interesting and exciting of the Parliamentary year. Politics are coming to a head. Both sides have all their men in town. A desperate effort is being made to get as many Bills as possible through. There are full attendances and important divisions. There is nothing of that kind this year. Everybody says that the Session is virtually over, that it was over at Easter. What everybody says is not always true. Foreign or Colonial affairs might suddenly develop in unexpected ways, and even a Ministerial crisis is conceivable; but at present all the signals point to a dead calm. The amazing revelations in the South Africa Committee cannot well be discussed in the House of Commons until the Committee has reported; and when the Committee will report, even upon the first branch of its inquiry, nobody knows. The prudence and moderation of the South African Republic, which Mr. Chamberlain has suitably acknowledged, removes all immediate probability of serious disturbance at the Cape. The intervention of Russia has checked the Sultan in an enterprise which might have led to the gravest results. The debate on South Africa which had been fixed for last night stands indefinitely postponed, and no debate on Foreign policy appears to be in contemplation. The House of Commons has been favoured by the Foreign Office with very little information. If Members of Parliament, mere representatives of the people, want to know what we are doing abroad, they must get some Lord to ask Lord Salisbury. Mr. Curzon is not allowed to say anything, and Mr. Balfour has nothing to say. Mr. Chamberlain expressed a desire that the South African discussion should be put off. We do not say that he was wrong. Parliamentary debates are not always conducive to the success of negotiations, and Mr. Chamberlain's own speeches are not the most soothing element in Parliamentary debates. The greatest irritation of the greatest number appears to be the chief object of those harangues which he assures us he delivers with a reluctance that is certainly well concealed.

The House of Commons has recently been passing through some curious phases, which will be regarded with much interest by the future historian of these times. The House elected in 1892 had such an unstable equilibrium that, though it lasted nearly three years, it was always trembling on the verge of dissolution. Every individual vote was valuable, and before the end it had become doubtful whether the Government really had a majority at all. The House of Lords was actively hostile to the House of Commons, and conflicts between the two Houses were frequent. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the House of Commons excited at that period keen and universal interest. Nobody could say that such was the case now. There has not been a period within living memory when Parliamentary debates were so little read, and Parliamentary divisions were the subject of so little anxiety. So far as the divisions are concerned, the reason is obvious. With a majority which has not yet fallen to a hundred and forty, nothing short of a miracle could lead to a defeat of the Government. But as regards the debates some other explanation must be sought. Bills do not become less interesting because they are sure to pass. The withdrawal of the Education Bill last year was a tremendous political event, and would have dealt most Governments a mortal wound. But with a majority of a hundred and fifty a Government can do no wrong. Moreover, Mr. Balfour's collapse was one of those things which can only happen once. Conscious that his position was at stake, the Leader of the House plainly told his followers that if they did not accept his Subscribers' Relief Bill, and pass it exactly as it was introduced, they would get no Bill at all, and they would have to find another chief. Threats backed by force are usually efficacious, and Mr. Balfour deserves no credit for his successful bluffing. But obviously a game of this sort detracts from the interest of the House of Commons. A Bed of Justice before the French Revolution may have been an imposing ceremony; but nobody cared what happened at it, because everybody knew the result beforehand.

The doctrine of verbal inspiration can hardly be applied to the Workmen's Accidents Bill. Such a measure touches too many pockets and rouses too many susceptibilities to be rammed through the House of Commons like a mere clerical dole. The Bill, considering its immense importance, has fallen very flat. It shows the neglect into which all Parliamentary business has fallen. The tone of the speech Mr. Chamberlain with so much feigned reluctance delivered on the second reading is another illustration of the small respect which even the leaders of the majority feel for the present House. Mr. Chamberlain hardly pretends to argue in support of the Bill. He does not recognise the House of Commons as having any jurisdiction. His procedure is very simple. "You don't like the Bill, don't you? Go and tell your constituents so." In the case of the Prison Goods Bill, Mr. Chamberlain's attitude was even more remarkable. He did not merely absolve himself from the duty of arguing. He expressly admitted that the Bill was of "small economic" though of "great political importance." The plain English of that is, of course, that a perfectly useless and utterly foolish Bill may serve to catch votes for the party which introduces it. That is a proposition which has long been known and often adopted in the more backward States of the American Union. It is there found that to pass a law which cannot work, or to pass a law in a form which makes it unworkable, may be economically harmless and politically expedient. Lord Salisbury's Administration, to which Mr. Chamberlain gives an indescribable tone, has been the first to adopt this precious principle in English politics. In recommending to the House a Bill which he knew and felt was ridiculous, Mr. Chamberlain appeared as the Brummagem Boss, naked and unashamed. He has trampled upon the memory of Bright and Cobden. Their aims and ideals were, indeed, very

different from his. But even Mr. Chamberlain would not venture to be quite so like himself in the House of Commons if the House of Commons had not sunk in public esteem.

THE EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY DEBATE.

THE debate on the second reading of the Employers' Liability Bill was creditable to the House of Commons as an assembly of "the people's men of business." With the exception of Mr. Chamberlain's characteristic outburst, there was a commendable absence of party spirit, and a general desire to point out how the Bill could be improved without destroying it. On the general principle the House seemed to be practically unanimous. The general principle we take to be this: That employers in the larger industries may fairly be called upon to compensate their workmen who are seriously injured in the course of their employment. We cannot agree with those few people who seem to think that the enforcement of this obligation must necessarily place an intolerable burden on capital, or that (apart from the details of this particular Bill) the proposal need be in practice unworkable. The most effective answer to this contention was furnished by Sir John Brunner. He informed the House that for sixteen years the firm of Brunner, Mond & Co. had paid compensation exactly in the way the Bill proposed. They had paid compensation without the precaution of insuring themselves, and they had never had a legal dispute. They found that the cost of compensation was much less than the amount quoted to them as the insurance premium, and it need hardly be said that the burden has not proved too heavy for the industry to bear. An ounce of fact is worth a pound of theory, and Sir John Brunner's experience disposes of the idea that the Government is attempting anything impracticable.

But it is equally clear that the Bill, as it stands, is crude and ill-considered, and that much amendment is necessary. The Attorney-General admitted that, so far as the building trade is concerned, the words of the Bill did not carry out the intentions of the Government. They intended the Bill to apply, as the Factory Acts do, to buildings more than thirty feet high; they made it apply only to buildings on which steam power is used. This is a very important difference, though we are not convinced that the thirty-foot rule, however appropriate it may be in the case of provisions in the Factory Acts requiring various mechanical safeguards to life, is defensible when transported into an entirely different measure. The Attorney-General also suggested that in cases of permanent disablement it would be well to provide for a lump sum down instead of a pension. In the face of suggestions of this kind coming from the chief law officer of the Government, it is preposterous for Mr. Chamberlain to raise an outcry about smothering the Bill with amendments. The Bill admittedly requires amendment. It is a far-reaching if not an altogether novel proposal, and the amendments will need careful consideration. If the Government have not arranged Parliamentary time so as to allow of such consideration, they cannot be in earnest about their Bill. If, under such circumstances, they withdraw the Bill they will not be able to throw the blame upon their opponents. They will be suspected, and not without reason, of having proposed it to catch votes, and of having withdrawn it for fear of offending the employers on their own side.

The larger points which especially require treatment are seven: (1) whether the doctrine of common employment should be abolished, and the workman's remedy at law thus increased; (2) whether the legal procedure contemplated by the Bill is likely to be satisfactory or cheap; (3) whether the trade exemptions are justifiable, and more especially whether seamen and agricultural labourers should not be included; (4) whether incapacity due to slow poisoning in unhealthy industries should not be a ground for compensation; (5) whether any safeguards can be suggested in case of the bankruptcy of the employer, especially where that employer is a sub-contractor; (6) whether further provisions against contracting-out are required; and (7) whether in any special cases contribution towards the cost of compensation should be recovered from others besides the employer. It would be impossible within the limits of our space to discuss all these questions, many of which are difficult and technical. It is enough for the moment to touch on a few. The notion that Mr. Chamberlain has managed by some adroit provision to get rid of the lawyers is of course absurd. So long as men have differences, and require those differences to be precisely determined, they will need lawyers to aid them. The only way to reduce the cost of law is to minimise the occasion of difference. By making a clean sweep of the doctrine of common employment the Government might have removed a fruitful cause of difference. But they have left the Employers' Liability Act as it was, and the common law as it was; and there is nothing in their Bill to prevent every single action being fought out, which would have been necessary if the law remained unchanged. They have besides, under the euphemism of arbitration, set up new courts and created a new legal procedure to settle the new differences—many of which must be of a troublesome and difficult nature—which will arise under their Bill. All they have done is to prevent any of these difficulties being finally determined by a decision of the High Court. The case law under their Bill will be County Court case law, and every County Court judge will be a law unto himself. He may give absolutely ridiculous decisions, but the litigants will be unable to set him right. The difficulties of interpretation which always arise under new statutes will remain without authoritative decision, and an uncertainty will result which must largely increase costs. The objection to lawyers is largely based on ignorant obscurantism, but whether or not there be ground for that objection, this Bill certainly fails to carry out the intention of its framers.

Any lawyer who does fancy that his business will be directly injured, has only to turn to the possibilities of bankruptcy under the Bill to find ample compensation. A very cursory consideration is sufficient to show that in the more dangerous and speculative trades bankruptcy will be the natural consequence of an accident. The employer, it is said, may insure himself, but there are many employers whom no company will insure even against the limited risks of the present law, and no company would insure any coal owner (however careful) against the risks of the new law. The more favourite precaution will be the formation of limited liability companies, which the House of Lords in Salomon's case has made easier and safer than ever. This may protect the employer from personal insolvency, but it will make the workman even less likely to get his compensation. A prudent workman, if the Bill passes as it stands, might well refuse to work for any master who could not give him a satisfactory banker's reference. The social consequences of employers' insolvency would be so alarming that something like the German system of contribution by trade would soon

become essential. In the case of coal-mining this would not be enough. Parliament is throwing upon the lessees of coal mines an obligation, variously calculated at a penny to threepence per ton on the average, which was not taken into account when the royalties were fixed by agreement. The obligation includes compensation in cases where there has been no negligence on the part of anybody. It seems preposterous to cast the whole of this obligation on the lessee and none of it on the lessor, and we are glad to see that Mr. Samuel Evans proposes to remove this blot from the Bill.

THE COMING CRISIS IN GERMANY.

LAST Tuesday the Parliament of the German Empire vindicated political liberty, and passed what was virtually a vote of censure on the German and Prussian Governments. By 207 votes to 53 a Bill was carried securing to political societies throughout the Empire that right to combine with one another in pursuit of their ends, of which Prussian associations were deprived last year by judicial interpretation, and which the Chancellor had formerly promised to secure. His fulfilment of his promise by the Bill amending the laws relating to political organisation in Prussia, which is now before the Parliament of that kingdom, is one of those literal fulfilments which are real evasions. The right of political societies to combine is guaranteed to them, but this concession is so overlaid with reactionary provisions that it is useless. The Bill puts it in the power of a police official to decide whether any particular meeting is exhibiting a tendency calculated to undermine the foundations of the State or endanger the public peace, and if he decides in the affirmative to dissolve it on the spot. It excludes minors from political meetings—apparently in the vain hope of preventing the Social Democratic party from obtaining recruits. And, finally, whereas political associations can now only be dissolved by the judicial authority, after a legal inquiry, the Bill permits their dissolution by the police authorities, without any of the safeguards at present secured by legal forms. Of what use is permission to combine accompanied by the threat of dissolution whenever combination seems to the police to be dangerous?

The action of the Reichstag might be supposed by a superficial observer to settle the question, and to free the evidently reluctant Chancellor from the bonds imposed on him by his reactionary colleagues and the still more reactionary unrecognised advisers who surround the Kaiser and pull the wires of the Imperial and the Prussian Governments. In reality it will only act as a stimulus to those reactionaries. It is the kind of move which they expect and which forwards their plans. The Bill just passed by the Reichstag was brought in by the Opposition—the Liberals of various hues, the Catholics, and the Social Democrats. It will now have to go to the Federal Council; and as it conflicts in spirit, though not in form, with the views of the Prussian Government, and (we believe) both in spirit and in form with the existing law of Saxony, we cannot suppose it has much chance of success. The Prussian Government will say that it is ready to effect the same end "with proper safeguards against subversive or Anarchist machinations"—as it now proposes to do by the Prussian Bill. The struggle on that Bill will come the week after next. It has been referred to a Committee, and the probability seems to be that the Committee will report early next week in favour (as is indicated by its proceedings on Thursday) of excising from it most of its reactionary provisions. Then the Conservatives in the Prussian Chamber will move to reinstate these provisions, and if they can do that they can, of course, pass the Bill. There are now (we quote Herr Richter's organ) 431 members of the Prussian Parliament, two seats being vacant; of these 212 are Conservatives of various shades, while there are 87 National Liberals, 94 Catholics—who learnt some Liberalism in the Kulturkampf—20 Liberals, 16 Poles, and 2 Danes; a total of 219. If the National Liberals would vote solidly in accordance with the line taken by such leading organs of their party as the *Cologne Gazette*, the fate of the Bill would be assured. But the party is disorganised, some of its members are Conservative and some Agrarian, and the suggestion of the Bill is ascribed to a so-called National Liberal who is above all an anti-Socialist, Baron von Stumm. Something may be done to delay the Bill, inasmuch as two of its provisions conflict with the declaration of the right of public meeting contained in the Prussian Constitution; and Bills altering the Constitution require a longer interval than other Bills to elapse between their respective stages. But it is hardly probable that this will cause the Bill to be dropped. It will in the ordinary course of things be voted upon, and carried by the votes of seceding National Liberals. And then the Prussian police will proceed to put down Socialism with a high hand—doubtless with the effect of ultimately increasing the Social Democratic vote.

Now this increase, and this conflict between the authorities and the people, between the Executive Government and the Imperial Legislature, is precisely what the reactionaries want to intensify. The ring of unrecognised advisers of the Emperor (as the *Cologne Gazette*, with very remarkable plainness of speech, has pointed out) are quite ready, in their own interest, to bring about a "Chancellor crisis," to replace Prince Hohenlohe by one of themselves, and to force on Germany their own antiquated and dangerous Toryism. That loyalty has greatly declined since the death of the Emperor Frederick, as was significantly remarked by a Conservative member during the debate in the Reichstag, matters very little to them. They hate the Reichstag, the product of universal suffrage, and they welcome the prospect of an intensified opposition of the majority in it to the Government, because it will make an excuse for a *coup d'état* which they are known to desire, and which their chosen organ, the *Kreuz Zeitung*, has hinted at again, *apropos* of the present struggle. They are acting like an ill-natured rider who begins a quarrel with his horse in order to show that he is master; and they want an excuse for striking a blow at democracy that under present circumstances is impossible. If they can annihilate Social Democracy, well; if they can intensify it, better still. And therefore we think the best way to meet them is not in Parliament, but by an energetic expression of public opinion such as upset the reactionary Zedlitz School Bill in 1892. If the educated classes in Germany will petition and agitate; if the non-Conservative Press will go on speaking as plainly as it has spoken this week; if the National Liberals, so often the docile instruments of despotism, remember the Liberalism they once possessed and the superior intelligence which is their tradition; then we think the reactionists will discover their mistake. Otherwise, the Prussian Bill will pass in the ordinary way, and will intensify the discontent which finds expression in voting for Social Democratic candidates. Then we shall have a deadlock after the next elections—and then, perhaps, a famous

suggestion of the Kaiser's will be realised, and the citizen soldiery will be called on to shoot down their fathers and brothers.

INSURANCE.

THE comments offered in our last article upon the operations and methods of the London Life Association may be appropriately followed on the present occasion by some reference to the Metropolitan Life Assurance Society, whose sixty-second annual report and accounts have just come before us. The affinities between the two societies are obvious. Like its distinguished exemplar, the Metropolitan applies the profits earned on its trading exclusively to the reduction of premiums; like the elder office again, it eschews the assistance of the insurance agent, and, while its expenses of management are kept at the extreme point of economy, obtains only a moderate new business, the dormant attitude it preserves in its appeal to the public for support plainly acting as a check on the growth of widespread popularity it might otherwise attain.

Founded on the mutual principle in the year 1835, the Metropolitan started at a favourable period, when the beneficial record of insurance had obliterated all the foolish prejudices against it; while, on the other hand, the business was not so over-exploited as to withhold from a new society a fair prospect of success. That the Metropolitan soon found the high road to prosperity everyone knows who is cognisant of its slow but steady progression to its present position as revealed in the report under notice. The funds of the Society have gradually accumulated to a total now slightly in excess of two millions; the premium income has reached £167,000, and the result of the last annual valuation was not only to enable the Society to maintain the high rates of abatement applicable to the various "series" of members—they vary from 71 per cent. in the oldest series to 31 per cent. in the class recently commenced—but to bring forward, after making all provision for these, a surplus of £19,670, one-half of which was wisely added to the reserve fund for strengthening the basis of valuation. Sound in financial position, prudent in management, and offering substantial advantages to those who favour its system, the Metropolitan presents a record wholly favourable, except on one point: that is, the meagre amount of new business annually placed on the Society's books. The normal figure for many years has been £200,000, or thereabouts, but last year it fell to the poor total of £138,000; and though the drop may be explained by the closing of a "series," which, no doubt, checks intending insurers by communicating a certain sense of exclusion, the falling-off is so considerable that we are not surprised to hear that "the directors are giving special attention to the extension of the business," whatever that may eventually signify. Without in any way over-estimating the importance of increasing the bulk of business, it is quite clear that an insurance company, to maintain its popularity, must counterbalance the natural and continual depletions of its membership by the acquisition of new risks to take the place of those which emerge in the ordinary course of events. And, having regard to the daily-increasing competition for insurance business and the enormous development of the leading offices which threaten some day to adapt their operations to every possible scheme and system of insurance, the difficulty of obtaining business, even in a special line, must necessarily be increased as time goes on. Offices like the London Life and the Metropolitan will then find themselves confronted with the commission question, with much more urgency than at the present time. Whether these old conservative institutions will ever bend to the blast remains to be seen, but there is one possible solution of the difficulty—if it arises—which we believe would be thoroughly successful. The non-competitive attitude of the two societies, as regards other life offices, begins to be absurd, when one considers the active antagonism which must exist between the two concerns themselves in their quest of a similar class of business; and, in the light of this consideration, one cannot help thinking what a popular and powerful combination would be effected if the London Life and the Metropolitan should, some of these days, join their resources and enter into a friendly amalgamation.

One point in the report of the Metropolitan which calls for special attention is the adoption of a resolution to enable the Society to enlarge its powers of investment—more particularly with a view to placing a portion of the funds in English railway stock and joint-stock securities. In this determination to widen the channels of profit available for its funds—hitherto restricted to the class of investment known as "trustee securities"—the Metropolitan is merely following the lead of such eminent and carefully managed institutions as the Scottish Widows' Fund and the National Provident, both of which, in company with several other life assurance societies, have been practically compelled to take this step by the general fall in interest which has been experienced on the large funds they have invested. How serious has been the depreciation may be judged by the figures from the Board of Trade returns as quoted by the chairman of the Metropolitan in his speech at the meeting. It appears from these that the net rate of interest realised by all the offices together has fallen from £4 4s. 8d. per cent. in 1882 to £3 17s. 1d. per cent. in 1897, an average fall of 6d. per cent. per annum. With no immediate prospect of any recovery in this respect, and with the urgent necessity before them of maintaining as far as possible the returns made to their policyholders in the past, the insurance offices have really little choice but to exercise more enterprise in the placing of their finances. The alternative would be to reduce the rate of interest assumed in the valuation, cut down the bonus, and submit to the diminution of current business which would probably follow; but only one office of note has adopted this heroic course, and it is not at all likely that any number of the others will follow its example.

FINANCE.

IN consequence of the armistice in the Near East and Mr. Balfour's statement to the effect that the proposed debate on South Africa was to be put off because important negotiations were going on, there has been a great rise in prices, and far more activity upon the Stock Exchange than has been witnessed since the Raid. The most marked improvement has been in South African mining shares. It was well known that speculators sometime ago convinced themselves that a rise in prices was impossible, and that therefore they sold on a most unusual scale what they did not possess; especially this was done by French and German operators. The knowledge that so many persons had too deeply committed themselves encouraged other operators to buy actively, and the speculators for the fall took alarm and eagerly bid for the shares which they had previously sold. A very remarkable advance had taken place last week. The rise since then is equally remarkable. In one sense it is more so, because it is much more general. Moreover, last week the buying was chiefly speculative; this week there appears to be no doubt that genuine investors have been purchasing upon a considerable scale. At all events, brokers report that they have bought more for persons who wanted from fifty to one hundred shares than they have done since the breakdown in the autumn of 1895. There has also been a very

considerable advance in Western Australian shares, and all departments have shared more or less in the recovery. Whether the movement will continue depends, of course, upon political developments. If the Greek question is settled soon, and if a friendly arrangement is arrived at with the Transvaal, it is almost certain that there will be a continuance of buying. The one danger apparent at the moment is that President McKinley may yield to the Jingoes in the Senate—who threaten to block the Tariff Bill—and may adopt action as regards Cuba which may lead to trouble. The Uruguayan Government alleges that it has gained a great victory over the insurgents, but little credence is given to the statement, which for that matter has been made more than once already, and yet the insurrection goes on. The Government proposes a loan of £800,000, and expressly states that the loan will enable it to pay the interest on its existing debt—a very significant hint to Uruguayan bondholders. The news from Argentina is not satisfactory. There is much distress amongst agriculturists in the great provinces of Santa Fé and Entre Rios, and in the northern part of Buenos Ayres, and several commercial failures have occurred. Venezuela is once more in the throes of revolution. The Fanatic movement in Brazil has not been put down, and there is great depression in Chili.

The rates of interest and discount are falling day after day. Now that the maintenance of peace seems to be assured, the gold demand for the Continent has practically ended, and as gold is coming in on a considerable scale, there is every prospect that money will be abundant for a considerable time. It is true that Japan is borrowing for the professed purpose of adopting a gold currency. But the Japanese loan is small compared with the resources of London, and is not looked upon, therefore, as a serious matter. The Indian loan is intended to enable the India Council to make its usual payments in London, and therefore, except for a day or two, will have no practical effect upon the Money Market. Silver continues very weak, and the India Council again finds it difficult to dispose of its drafts. On Wednesday it offered for tender 35 lacs, and sold only a little over 20 lacs, the bills at an average price fo 1s. 2$\frac{3}{4}$d. per rupee and the transfers at a slightly higher quotation. In the meantime the Indian Money Market is as stringent as ever.

Yesterday tenders were received at the Bank of England for an Indian 2$\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. sterling loan. The loan will be consolidated with the existing 2$\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stock, which is not redeemable until 1926. It has become necessary because of the difficulty of the India Council in selling its drafts owing to the famine and the plague.

The London County Council has been very successful in its first attempt to float six months' bills. It offered for tender £600,000 in such bills, and the applications amounted to very nearly four millions. The price obtained averaged £99 8s. 9d.

The North China Gold Territories Development Company (Limited) has a share capital of £375,000 in 250,000 seven per cent. cumulative preference shares, and 125,000 ordinary shares of £1 each. The Preference shares are offered for subscription. The company is formed to develop the mineral resources of the territories of Prince T'san. The purchase price is £205,000.

F. Steiner & Co., Limited, has a capital of £925,000, 45,000 five per cent. cumulative preference shares, and 47,500 ordinary shares both of £10 each. There is a debenture stock also of £450,000 four per cent., redeemable in 1912. The total share and loan capital is, therefore, £1,375,000. The Company takes over the business of F. Steiner & Co., dyers and calico printers, carried on at or near Accrington, and in Manchester, Glasgow, London, and Belfast. The purchase money has been fixed at £1,110,000.

Mongers West Australian Stores (Limited) has a capital of £255,000, in 125,000 six per cent. cumulative preference shares, 125,000 ordinary shares, and 5,000 founders' shares, all of £1 each. The founders' shares are entitled to half the profits after 10 per cent. dividend has been paid on the ordinary—an objectionable feature. The Company is to acquire the business of J. H. Monger & Co., Limited, store, express transport agents, etc., in various parts of Western Australia, and the store, hotel, and transport business of the Western Australia Gold Fields, Limited. The purchase price is £120,000.

THIS MORNING'S PAPER.

By a Mere Outsider.

SATURDAY.—The South Africa Committee got its telegrams yesterday, and most interesting reading they were found to afford. No doubt they will be published in a day or two, and they are certain to excite a very lively controversy. But I believe that there are other telegrams which are needed to complete the story, and these the Committee will no doubt call for. As for the inquiry itself, I am told that the members of the Committee believe that they are approaching the end of their labours, and there are even some persons sanguine enough to believe that they may present a unanimous report to the House of Commons before the close of the session.

There is, I fear, no ground for the story circulated yesterday as to a possible prorogation of Parliament before June 22nd. As a matter of fact, the end of July is now believed to be the time at which our legislators will cease their not very severe labours. Ministers might like to see an earlier prorogation, but to this it is not probable that the Opposition will consent. Last night's announcement as to the intention of the Government to open an inquiry into the working of the Irish Land Commission will certainly not tend to shorten the proceedings at Westminster. Such a step ought to bring the Irish Nationalist party together, and it may even cause some trouble within the ranks of the Ministry.

I am told that, despite the great influx of visitors into London at the time of the Jubilee celebration, the demand for houses in the West End, except in the ultra-fashionable quarter, has been comparatively small. This is attributed to the fact that nowadays the hotel accommodation of London is so much better than it ever was before. Hundreds of people who, a few years ago, always took a house for the season when they came to town now content themselves with rooms at one or other of the many excellent hotels which during the last dozen years have been built in the West End. The system of co-operative housekeeping is clearly growing amongst us. Another fact connected with the Jubilee celebration reached my ears the other day. The Queen's procession will be of such enormous dimensions that before her Majesty quits Buckingham Palace the van of the procession will have reached Somerset House. Not since the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, forty-five years ago, has a pageant of this magnitude been witnessed in Great Britain.

Sunday.—The charity dinner season is now at its height, and last night there was an exceptional gathering of this kind in connection with the Newspaper Press Fund. The dinner was memorable for two reasons. One was the magnificent subscription that rewarded the efforts of the Chairman and the other speakers. It is seldom, even in these days of large donations, that a charity dinner produces a subscription list of more than £3,000. Another notable feature of the dinner was the fact that the Council of the Fund, instead of seeking a chairman among eminent politicians, ambassadors, or great noblemen, according to their wont, had sought and obtained the services of a distinguished working journalist, Sir John Robinson, of the *Daily News*. It is gratifying to know that in paying a well-earned

tribute to one of the veterans of the London Press they at the same time did so well for the charity whose interests they have at heart.

Monday.—The Turkish terms of peace announced this morning have been received with a general cry of incredulous wrath. Certainly the Sultan—who is not such a fool as to regard Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett as a typical representative of English opinion—must have allowed himself to yield far too readily to the pressure of the military party in Turkey if he has really assented to this preposterous and insolent demand. However, good may come out of evil; and it would almost seem as though English opinion might once more be united in opposition to Abdul by this attempt to blackmail not merely the Greeks, but Europe as a whole. The only fear is that, through the violence and indiscretion of the extreme men on both sides, the desired unity of the nation in face of the oppressor may not be attained. If we can keep our heads, however, we may yet see Great Britain taking not only a worthy part, but the leading part in resisting this attempt on the part of the Sultan to extend his detestable empire over territories that are now happily free from his rule. But if the newspapers are to keep up personal and party recriminations and to insist on fighting over again all the petty controversies of the last two months, this fair prospect will most certainly not be realised. One must wait with anxiety to see what course will be taken by those who aspire to be the leaders of the nation.

If it were not for this Eastern Question and its various phases, all life would have gone out of the political world. The proceedings of the House of Commons practically pass unnoticed. The attendance at Westminster is small, and the interest taken in the business of Parliament is smaller still. Not since the closing days of the Palmerstonian *régime*, when men of all parties were agreed to leave the aged statesman at peace for the rest of his life, has there been anything like the prevailing apathy. It is true that we have an election in prospect, and one for a Conservative seat; but the history of the constituency that has become vacant by the death of Mr. Wickham is such that the Tory newspapers are perhaps justified in the exultation with which they refer to a possible contest.

Tuesday.—All over Europe, except possibly in Berlin, there is an outburst of anger against the Sultan, who is denounced now for his insolence even by the *Times*. This is distinctly the best feature in the political situation. It is fortunate that Abdul Hamid has made demands so preposterous that they revolt everybody, and will do much to efface the recollection of the blunders of the Greeks. But though there is now a possibility that all parties in Great Britain and all the European Powers may be united in an Anti-Turkish policy, it by no means follows that it will be easy to solve the difficulties of the position in which Europe is now lodged. The Sultan has a far greater dread of the military and religious fanatics of his own Empire than of the ambassadors, and it is quite possible that if he has to choose between submission to the Concert and obedience to the agitators in Turkey, he will adopt the latter alternative. Besides, he is by no means assured as yet that all the Powers will act against him if he defies them. The attitude of Germany, or rather of the German Emperor, upon this question of Greece and Turkey, is one of the most remarkable features of the situation. It is said by persons who ought to know that his Majesty is possessed by an almost insane hatred of the Greek Royal Family, which dates from the conversion of his favourite sister, the Crown Princess, to the Greek Church. Men who are deep in the secrets of the *Chancelleries* of Europe profess to find in this fact the cause of much that is otherwise inexplicable in the state of affairs. If the Emperor, in order to gratify his fury against Greece and her Royal Family, should support the Sultan now, it is difficult to see how we can avoid the terrible catastrophe of a general war.

There is one theory with regard to the war which I do not pretend to accept, but which is held in some well-informed quarters. It is that the real purpose of the Autocratic Powers in the Concert has been to punish Greece for her refusal to join in the anti-English alliance and to reduce her virtually to the condition of a province of Germany. In this theory also the personal hatred of the German Emperor against his sister plays a part; and it is declared by those who hold it that unless England acts with vigour and promptitude, and shows that she really means to save Greece from the fate marked out for her by her enemies, the plot will be successful, and English as well as Greek interests in the Levant will be utterly ruined. "Vigour and promptitude" are unfortunately qualities conspicuous by their absence from the policy of Downing Street at this moment.

Wednesday.—The stoppage of the War at the instigation of the Czar is the best bit of news this morning; but surely Lord Salisbury must have felt a certain degree of shame when he had to intimate that it was through no action of his own, but through that of one of the despots of the Continent that the sword of the Unspeakable Turk had been stayed. "My lords, it was not always thus!" sang Tennyson once upon a time; and the words apply to the present situation. There was a period when it was England, not Russia, that spoke the word of command at Constantinople. To-day England seems to be struck dumb. As for Lord Salisbury's onslaught upon the hundred members who signed the telegram to the King of Greece, it strikes one as coming with bad taste from the lips of the man who deserted his post and left English interests and English honour for weeks at the mercy of the Great Powers of Europe during the gravest crisis of modern times. I know that Lord Salisbury pleads ill-health as the reason for his flight from London, and I am by no means one of those who approve of the action of the M.P.'s in sending their message to Athens; but the last man in the world who has the right to rebuke them is Lord Salisbury. If he had been more courageous and more consistent, there would have been no room for the mistakes which were committed on the other side. Let him purge himself of his own rank offending before he presumes to censure others.

The South African telegrams (or rather a portion of them) are out at last, and as I hinted would be the case, they furnish ample materials for very grave reflection. One may leave them for the present to speak for themselves. Other telegrams may be forthcoming later on, but those which we have now tell only too much for the comfort of some persons. I see that Mr. Harris, the witness under examination yesterday, after fully exonerating the late Mr. Fairfield from all fore-knowledge of the Raid, attempted to place a different interpretation upon a conversation he had with that gentleman from that which Mr. Fairfield himself gave of it at the time. Mr. Harris is unfortunate enough to differ with other persons besides Mr. Fairfield in his recollection of private conversations, and I do not imagine that anything he said yesterday will be regarded as outweighing declarations made by Mr. Fairfield himself not only at the time the events referred to occurred, but subsequently when he was a dying man.

There is one good piece of news in connection with South Africa to-day. It is understood that the differences between this country and the Transvaal are on the point of being adjusted.

Thursday.—There was a large gathering of London Radicals at the National Liberal Club last night, when Sir William Harcourt was the chief guest at a reception given by the Political Committee of the club. It is satisfactory to see that this institution, which in its earlier days had so successful and useful a career, is waking up to new life. Liberals, for some occult reason, can never compete with Tories in the number, at all events, of their clubs.

In London at this moment, outside the limits of the City, there are only four clubs which are nominally attached to the Liberal cause—Brooks's, the Reform, the Devonshire, and the National Liberal—against twice the number of Tory institutions. Last night's gathering at the National Liberal Club seems to indicate that the great building on the Embankment will again be utilised as one of the chief centres of Liberal activity in the metropolis. So long as it does not fall into the hands of any one section of the party and become the scene of the operations of a mere clique, this revival of its activity will be generally welcomed. Speaking of sections, I understand that the so-called "Radical Committee" in the House of Commons is contemplating an active political campaign in the autumn. A "divine discontent" with everybody and everything is one of the characteristics of this energetic little body. This feeling is specially strong among its members so far as the occupants of the front Opposition bench are concerned. Indeed, some ardent souls of the Committee go so far as to announce their resolve to proclaim a brand new leader or leaders during their autumn campaign. It will be interesting to learn upon whom their choice falls.

Friday.—One of the amusing features of the political situation abroad is the Codlin-and-Short rivalry between the Czar and the German Emperor. Who is the man whom the Sultan delights most to honour, and by whose influence the cessation of hostilities was secured? All the German newspapers unite in declaring that the Emperor William is this person, and on Wednesday they exulted in the fact that his word had proved more weighty at Constantinople than that of all the other Powers combined. But now we know that it was, after all, the Czar, and not the German Emperor, who prevailed upon the Sultan to put a stop to the progress of Edhem Pasha's army; and the Press of Paris and St. Petersburg is uniting in jubilation over the fact. It is not for Englishmen to share in this exultation. Our business is to recognise the fact that in the nerveless hands of Lord Salisbury the might of Great Britain has been absolutely neutralised in the east of Europe. This unpleasant truth is now recognised by Conservatives themselves, and I have never heard so much anger at the conduct of a Government expressed by its own supporters as I hear now from the Conservative side of the House.

THE PROTECTION OF BEAUTIFUL PLACES.

WHILE the House of Lords was discussing last week the defects of the present system of Scottish Private Bill legislation—and even suggesting that business of this nature might advantageously be dealt with in Scotland by Scots—Mr. Bryce was inducing the House of Commons to recommit for further consideration a railway Bill affecting one of the most beautiful districts of the North. The grounds on which this unusual course was taken are interesting as illustrating Parliamentary tactics. The Bill is strongly opposed, both in the district affected and in other parts of Scotland too. It was allowed to pass a second reading because it was known to be opposed, and because it was believed that it would go before a Select Committee, where the arguments against it would be thoroughly considered. But at the last moment the only opponents of the Bill who had any *locus standi* before the Committee, those whose land it was proposed to take, were induced to withdraw their petitions against it. The Bill consequently went to the Unopposed Bill Committee, before whom no opponent could appear, and passed unamended as a matter of course. The interest of the public in the matter was not gone into, for it is a maxim of Parliament that before Private Bill committees "the public have no friend." Under these circumstances, Mr. Mellor pleaded, it was a matter of simple justice to send the Bill back to a Select Committee, in order that the arguments against it might be heard. In spite of the Government's resistance, Mr. Bryce carried the House along with him, and five gentlemen were appointed to inquire whether the proposed railway will "so seriously injure the scenery of the valley and lake along which it is to pass" as to justify the House of Commons in throwing the proposal out.

The arguments alleged against the Bill assure us that the railway would injure for letting purposes the value of the property of residents, and that it would seriously interfere with the numerous crofts. But to these arguments there is the obvious answer that facilities of access tend almost invariably to increase rather than to diminish the letting value of houses, and that better communications with the towns around them are what the crofters generally desire. The real strength of the opposition, however, rests on æsthetic rather than on commercial grounds, and on the frank assumption that it is the duty of Parliament to prevent the beautiful places of Nature from being ruined by the work of man. It is this hypothesis which gives its interest to the case, for Mr. Bryce's chief contention was that the new railway would desecrate a lovely glen, and destroy one of the most exquisite drives in the country. The proposal itself is comparatively small. The railway from Stirling to Oban already touches Lochearnhead, close to the Western limits of Loch Earn. Another branch of railway running westward from Perth and Crieff advances as far as Comrie, a little place some five or six miles distant from the east end of the loch. The promoters of the new line wish to connect Comrie with Lochearnhead by a short piece of railway carried along the north side of the loch, thus joining the two systems in an obviously convenient way. They claim to make the railway through the valley where they please. The Lord Advocate who supports them maintains that it is not a matter for the public whether the company choose to make their line on the north or on the south side of the loch. Many members seem to think that the difficulty might be got over by taking the latter course. But Mr. Bryce, as we understand him, will permit no compromise, and boldly declares that any railway in the valley will destroy a lovely spot. The author of the Bill for giving Access to Mountains cannot be suspected of illiberal or exclusive views. The question is at what point should the principle of access yield to the principle of solitude; at what point does the right of the community to enjoy the beautiful places of the land clash with its right to preserve the beauty which depends for its appeal to our sensations on most of the community being kept away.

We imagine that the time has gone by—or it may be is still far in the future—when considerations of picturesqueness can be permitted to outweigh considerations of real utility. If it is clearly proved that a railway is, in the opinion of any district, essential to its commercial prosperity, that argument would now almost invariably carry the day, and it is, no doubt, right that it should. It is only in instances where this definite proof is wanting and where only vague and general considerations of probable convenience can be adduced, that it is possible for the arbiters of taste to step in and arrest activity and to insist that those who would improve on Nature must make out their case. But in the Highlands there are a great many places upon this doubtful border-line where one is inclined to welcome a despot who interferes on solitude's behalf. Of course, there is always the argument to be faced that the true test of whether a railway is needed is whether it is worth anybody's while to make it; but that argument ignores the ways of company-promoters and other devices of these enterprising days. There is also the question how far any particular place, because it does not wish to be overrun, and how far

any lovers of beauty in the abstract, because they do not wish to see a fair spot spoiled, are justified in interfering with facilities which might give pleasure to thousands less happily situated than they. While Mr. Bryce, for instance, protests against the desecration of Loch Earn, Sir John Leng demands access to its loveliness on behalf of his constituents in Dundee. While your Cameron, standing on the causeways of Ben Nevis, lifts up his hands in horror at the railway there, your mill-hand from Paisley perhaps welcomes with enthusiasm a day's excursion to the head-waters of Loch Eil. On which side, one asks with hesitation, are the powers of the State to be invoked? Besides, there is always the preliminary point to settle—whether these engineering feats are necessarily so ugly as is generally assumed; whether, in fact, utility and beauty cannot very often be reconciled, if not combined. No one who knows Thirlmere since its transformation, or the beautiful reservoirs among the Yorkshire moors, will speak too confidently here. No one who has climbed round the wonderful curves of the St. Gothard will deny that a railway may be singularly picturesque. No one, to take an instance nearer home, who has taken train to Killiecrankie, to Rannoch, or to Loch Awe, will lay it down as an inflexible maxim that a railway necessarily ruins even the lonely grandeur of the hills. Beyond that, there is the further reflection that, after all, the question can never be more than one of circumstance and of degree. If to the happy dwellers by Loch Earn the notion of a railway comes with horror, may not their predecessors have looked with at least equal alarm upon the roads which it is now feared the railway may displace? Is it not possible that a few years will teach them to regard these iron-roads with equanimity and pleasure as part and parcel of the scene they love, just as their forefathers, who mourned the invasion of the heather by pickaxes and rollers long ago, became reconciled to the white, winding curves which gave them access to the haunts of men? We do not wish to strain the argument, but we think it is clear that in these things no principle can be laid down. We may perhaps be driven to stipulate some day, as the crowd of travellers increases, that parts of Scotland shall be kept uninvaded, in order that Scotchmen and Englishmen may yet find places where the secrets of solitude can be understood. We may perhaps insist that in the Western Highlands, where water-traffic is so easy railways should be sparingly introduced. But the time for these strong measures is hardly come. Meanwhile we can stipulate that each new proposal of this nature should be jealously watched and debated, in order that no needless changes should be made. We can insist, wherever new railways are established, upon their accepting such a course and such conditions as to interfere as little as possible with the beauties of the spot they touch. With this view we welcome Mr. Bryce's bold and salutary challenge of last week; and whether or not this particular line be needed, we hope that all who attempt to tamper with the scenery of Scotland will henceforth be required strictly to make out their case.

"UNTAINTED ALMSGIVING."

THERE are always enthusiasts who think it is possible to separate charity from worldliness. Of this class are the people who quaintly style themselves "The London Society of Church Beggars." Lady Gwendolen Cecil, who is the honorary secretary of this enterprising guild, explains that it is designed to put an end to the "degradation of Christian almsgiving" and the waste of charitable funds. The "degradation" lies chiefly in bazaars, where the benevolent are "asked, for the sake of Christian charity and a duchess's smile, to take things they do not want at more than their market value." That sardonic touch is not unworthy of Lady Gwendolen's parentage. Bazaars are festivals of snobbery; but snobbery is a useful element when money is wanted for good purposes. Every Tory has an honest conviction that his party alone can maintain the Empire; but is the "duchess's smile" disdained by the Primrose League? If that battery of fascination may be legitimately used to help the sale of political wares at "more than their market value," what chance is there that it will ever be generally regarded as degrading to Christian charity? Our social and political life is nothing but a great bazaar, in which all manner of considerations, unconnected with the value of the articles in which we deal, are found to control the price and dominate the buyers. How are you to take the element called charity out of this medley, and give it a moral atmosphere of its own? Lady Gwendolen and her friends have hit upon a device which is childlike in its simplicity. The "Church Beggars" are to write letters of personal appeal on behalf of various charities—not the usual lithographed circulars, we presume, but pretty, entreating notes, adorned with crests and even with coronets. The guile of the serpent, you perceive, which ought to accompany the innocence of doves, may repudiate bazaars, but does not disdain to avail itself of human nature in another way. Has Lady Gwendolen calculated the value of her autograph to a plebeian but ambitious household? The question is delicate, and may be regarded by some critics as improper; but as we did not start the discussion of market values, we may be permitted to hint that a *billet* from Arlington Street or Hatfield is not without its equivalent in a charitable subscription.

The bazaar, we imagine, is too deeply rooted in our social system to be touched by appeals to pure ethics. It is sown in charity, and watered by vanity. It forms common ground for many sincere persons and a multitude of others. It gives useless employment to the makers of crazy quilts, and transforms even the autograph-hunter into an apostle of humanity. The great man who said that "charity suffereth all things," must have had an inkling, even in his remote day, of the part which sheer selfishness and frivolity may play for the benefit of the poor. And why not? Lady Gwendolen Cecil says her ideal is "simple, honest, untainted, almsgiving." Even if this were practicable, why should the generalship of charity take no account of the agencies which cannot stand a rigorous catechism of motives? Who is to inquire whether every contribution to the Sunday offertory is "untainted"? Is it habit, or shamefacedness, which drops many coins into the impartial bag? Is a cheque for twenty-five thousand pounds to be refused unless the donor can satisfy an inquisitorial tribunal that the gift is not tainted with the desire for advertisement? We hear much of distinctions between the deserving and the undeserving poor. Who dreams of distinguishing between the deserving and undeserving philanthropists, of separating the devoted sheep from the artful goats? There is a kind of philanthropy, peculiar to our time, which confers substantial benefits on large classes, but, if analysed solely with a view to motive, might be found to consist of three parts ostentation to one part pure zeal. Enormous sums are given away annually by people whose chief stimulus is the desire of power. How is the principle of "simple, honest, untainted almsgiving" to be applied to them? It is true that Lady Gwendolen Cecil has an economic as well as a moral reason. Fashionable bazaars involve a waste, which she estimates at forty per cent. But suppose that every form of almsgiving were to cease to-morrow, except such as springs from the simple dictates of the heart; what would be the shrinkage in the receipts of the London charities? Would the "Society of Church Beggars" succeed in making good the deficiency before the crack of doom? What sort of charity would it be to those in need of it to deprive them of

every subscription which comes from sources that lack the perfect grace of true benevolence? If charity ceased to be a fashion, who would minister to the hunger that is now satisfied in great part out of the rich man's careless excess, the pushing man's greed of publicity, the grovelling of snobbery, and the frivolity of pretty, well-meaning, empty little heads?

Charity, like everything else in an imperfect world, is a mixture of good and ill. That amazing priest who told a congregation at Notre Dame that the Creator had put a number of innocent and helpless women to the most cruel of all deaths as an expiation for the freethought of the French Republic is probably a very charitable man. It does not occur to him that his theory is more consistent with the religion of Moloch than with the religion of Christ. If a tribunal should find that the calamity in the Rue Jean Goujon was due to the culpable laxity of certain persons, and if they should plead that, according to the logic of Père Ollivier, they were the unwitting instruments of the Divine will, the answer of the court may conflict with the confident assurance of the Notre Dame pulpit. Charity "suffereth all things" indeed when the tragical end of people who were ostensibly engaged in a good work is ascribed to a judgment from Heaven on the character of others who were safe elsewhere. On the whole, it is judicious to take charity as it comes without too close an inquiry into its antecedents. Lady Gwendolen Cecil should remember the proverbial warning against looking a gift horse in the mouth. Proverbs are not idealistic, but they are apt to sum up the practical wisdom of life. What is the wisdom which, apparently, is to inspire the "Society of Church Beggars" to discourage all forms of begging save their own? They cannot succeed except in the most undesirable way of multiplying the germs of the very "taint" which they want to destroy.

THE RENASCENCE OF THE CELT.

THE Irish capital is witnessing at present the first culmination, so to speak, of two movements the full significance of which is not to be adjudged by their immediate success. We refer to the celebrations, musical and literary, known respectively as the "Feis Ceoil" and the "Oireachtas." These festivals represent a memorable attempt to revive the knowledge and the spirit of ancient Irish music and poetry, with the aim of placing at the disposal of the pioneers of a new Celtic art, whether of poety or music, a source of inspiration at once potent and national. The value of the heritage of abiding literature which Ireland possesses is generally recognised by scholars, but not so much is known of the wealth of music which still remains to her. The promoters of the Feis Ceoil, or musical festival, conscious of the extent and character of these partly unknown treasures—a vast mass of exquisite Irish folk-music still exists in MS.—desired to secure recognition for it in the hope that a national school of music linked to an historic past yet in touch with a living present might result from the diffusion of that knowledge. Of the vitality of the musical instinct in the Irish people history is not silent. That most racy of chroniclers, Giraldus Cambrensis, found nothing unworthy of his abuse in the Irish but their music. Here are some of his remarks in the *Topographia* (in the course of a long and philosophical digression on music, which he winds up in the following charming manner, "I have greatly enjoyed this digression, nor do I think it was wholly uncalled for"):—"It is only in instrumental music that I find any commendable diligence in this nation; but in that art they incomparably excel every other people that I have met. For their execution is not, like that which we hear in Britain, slow and laboured, but adroit and sprightly, while their tone is full and the refrain of their melodies sweet and gay." Gerald, after some elegant criticism from the point of view of "a man whose ear has been educated to grasp the subtleties of harmony and to enter into the mysteries of musical science," goes on to tell us that "both Scotland and Wales strive emulously to rival Ireland in music: the former on account of affinity of race, the latter because of their mutual proximity and intercourse"—a friendly emulation and intercourse which we see illustrated seven hundred years later by the presence of the Herald Bard of Wales as ambassador from the Eisteddfod to the Irish Feis. "Many, however, think," adds Gerald (for it is with difficulty that he can bring himself to give the palm even in this matter to the Irish, "a race of savages: I say again, a race of utter savages"), "many however think that Scotland has not only equalled her teacher, Ireland, in musical skill, but has even far surpassed her, and now look to the former country as the fount of the harmonic art." As if to prove this—nay, and to prove much more, for our delightful Gerald is a good Welshman, and is not going to let his own gallant countrymen be put down by any other section of what a later Cambrian chronicler has styled "the Celtic fringe"—he tells us some facts about musical instruments. "Ireland, indeed, uses and takes pleasure in two instruments alone—the lute and the timbrel; Scotland in three—the lute, the timbrel, and the croud; Wales in the lute, the treble and bass pipes, and the croud." This would be a nice point for musical antiquarians to settle with Gerald, for Ireland did possess—and does still, as a relic of her ancient orchestra—"the treble and bass pipes"; a competition of Irish pipers, indeed, is one of the features of the Feis Ceoil, and that she used, if she did not take pleasure in, other instruments besides, is proved by the great curved brazen trumpets, so like the Roman horns in the Naples Museum, which hang on the walls in Kildare Street in the collection of the Royal Irish Academy. But on this occasion, when we are discoursing on an Irish musical revival, we may accept Gerald's first and more generous word that these people "incomparably excelled in this art every other people that he had met"; that, indeed, he found Ireland a land of song, where music was consciously used, as it was in Greece, as an agent of civilisation and national development, exciting "the valour of the brave and the pious aspirations of the devout," where "the bishops and abbots and holy men were wont to carry their lutes with them on their journeyings, and found a godly joy in song and tune; wherefore St. Kevin's harp is held by the natives in no small reverence as a holy and honourable relic to this very day."

Now, as Burke so truly insisted, a nation cannot with impunity break away from its past in the region of politics. In the sphere of art the severance can be made with still less success. And now that there is, explain as you will, a reawakening of the Celt—in France, in Wales, in Scotland, in Ireland—it is of the first moment that a trend of artistic fervour so promising in its dawn should be flushed with whatever was pure and noble in a past that was, it is admitted on all hands, glorified by its desire for the things of the mind and spirit. The student of literary epochs—and the same law governs the other arts—will have remarked that the rebirth of spirituality, whether in the form of neo-catholicism or mysticism, has synchronised with the decline of the naturalistic movement. Realism is bankrupt. Founded on the fallacy that man lives on bread alone, it was doomed from its inception to sterility and decay. The genius of a Flaubert might galvanise it for the moment into a semblance of life, but even in such a masterpiece as "Madame Bovary" one feels that much of its power and all its pathos come from qualities which its distinguished author would not find set out in the

naturalistic catechism. Again the genesis of a great mind like that of Tolstoi in an atmosphere of realistic art and its evolution towards an ever-deepening idealism is a study of the most suggestive kind. The span between "Anna Karenina" and "My Gospel" is one that is bridged only by the whole movement, not always a conscious movement, from realism towards an idealism as vague, but as attractive, as that which lured Shelley into the realms of poetry. It is a far cry from Tolstoi and Flaubert to the "Feis Ceoil," but thought can traverse these spaces, and must do so if one wishes to come at all on the philosophy of facts which, as such, are chronicled in the daily papers and read at the breakfast table as if they were no less and no more significant than a decision of the Concert of Europe or a fall in the price of Consols.

Realism being moribund, where are we to look for spiritual food? Is the human mind, like the waves of the sea, the passive sport of a surge and resurge of two diverse forces? Does history repeat itself with fatalistic accuracy; and is the pretended advance of thought mere iteration? These are questions that suggest themselves in face of a revival of spiritualism which, the critics told us, had had its day. But a modern revival of spiritualistic art is more significant than such a renascence of idealism could have been at any earlier stage of the world's history. The dying century has spent its best force and its brightest genius in the elaboration of views and systems which on their face, and even *ex vi terminorum*, undertook to show that man's life was horizoned by the visible, and his hopes "cribb'd, cabined and confined" by the durability of the comparatively insignificant globe on which he was whirled through space. Weapons were requisitioned from the arsenal of every science to support this position and to storm the last entrenchments of an effete other-worldliness. Is it nothing that after assaults so skilfully conducted and prowess so daring in its dash the spirit of idealism still hovers over the field of battle? The truths and beliefs that "seemed palpable" have proved beyond the reach of scientific armouries, and idealism is not even scathed by the contest, but rather strengthened in its hold on man. To leave metaphor, we mean to say that a revival of idealism to-day is of far deeper significance than it could possibly have been at any earlier stage of history; and consequently the vitality of the Celtic temperament—so nobly praised by Arnold and Renan—as shown by the new movement in Ireland, is a phenomenon of far more than passing import. More than once the Celt has purified English literature with ideals. The names of Thomson, of Burns, of Burke, of Scott, to mention but these, represent sources from which that literature drew fresh life and purity. Whether, as his enemies maintain, the Celt is doomed to inefficiency and failure in practical life, he has certainly, in that fascinating nature of his, depths of intellectual force which nurtured the strongest spirits the world has known, and is not likely to fail in the future. In a very true sense the victory is often to the weak; and we believe that Ireland, hampered and stifled as has been her material life by the force or fraud of the stronger nation, will yet once again capture and enthral our best minds by the purity and the power of her spiritual and artistic longings.

THE DRAMA.

"Secret Service"—"A Court of Honour"—Mdlle. Jane May—"The Hobby Horse."

It may seem incredible, but the Adelphi has a "problem" play! Psychology on the native heath of Mr. Sims and Mr. William Terriss! "Another helement has crep' in!" as Mr. Shattock, the decayed jockey, remarks in the *Hobby Horse*. Hitherto the Adelphi has been the home of unsophisticated emotion. There is a story of a lady who, when passing the Lyceum, glanced distrustfully at the placards, and said, "I don't like that Shakespeare! He's always trying to get his name up!" In the dark hour when intellectual analysis seemed to be creeping over our stage, I used to gaze at the name of Mr. Sims on the Adelphi bills, and reflect that, come what might, here was a refuge for the playgoer who wanted to feel, and not to think. But at the Adelphi now you *must* think! No doubt it is this unusual operation which holds the gallery in such an acute tension of silence while Mr. William Gillette is enacting the most remarkable scenes of *Secret Service*. I confess that once or twice I had an impulse to get up and cheer; it was the "problem" that kept me sedate and still.

Mr. Gillette, the author of this play, represents an officer of the Northern army, who is engaged upon a most dangerous mission in Richmond, then beleaguered by the Federal troops. He passes as a Southern officer, his credentials being forged letters from dead men. His object is to get access to the telegraph office of the Confederate War Department, and send false despatches which, by weakening the Southern lines at a certain spot, will enable the besiegers to break through. He has a brother in the same enterprise. It is part of the scheme that the brother shall be taken prisoner, and shall convey written instructions to the other agent. The paper is smuggled from the prisoner by a negro, who is detected in the act. It is handed to the first spy by the woman he loves, daughter of a Southern general, in whose house he is a constant visitor. He feels at once that suspicion is closing round him; a crisis is precipitated when his brother, who has given the guard the slip, bursts into the room and entreats him to commit fratricide for the cause. He refuses; but his brother snatches his revolver and falls mortally wounded at his feet. He picks up the weapon, and poses as a man who has done military justice upon a fugitive. Here the "problem" begins to work furiously, for your sympathies are at once engaged by the devotion of these brothers, by the self-sacrifice of one of them to duty, by the unfaltering nerve with which the survivor turns the situation to account in the presence of the enemy. "He is a spy," you tell yourself, "and the trade of the spy is the lowest deep of baseness." Is it? How many people took this view of Major Le Caron? Some of us can recall Harvey Birch in Fenimore Cooper's famous romance. Birch was a spy; but on his dead body was found a letter from George Washington, strongly commending his patriotism. In war, at all events, you cannot practise all the ethics of peace. It is a crime to kill a man in a private quarrel; but if you spring a mine which blows some thousands of your country's foes into eternity, your country throws up its cap and applauds you to the echo. A spy, when caught, expects to be shot without mercy; but how is he morally more despicable than the commander who, by a trick, lures the foe into ambush? You cannot moralise war; it has all the privileges of what Borkman calls "the morals of the higher rascality."

Still, Mr. Gillette's hero is conscious of a false position. His strategy succeeds so well that he is alone in the telegraph office, with the fate of Richmond in his hands. The whole range of the romantic drama might be searched in vain for any parallel to the intensity of this scene. Nothing is over-strained; the incidents develop naturally with an illusion of detail that recalls Mr. Stephen Crane's battle-pictures. The figure of the spy is not to be forgotten—cool, alert, swift to seize every desperate chance, accepting momentary defeat with calm and turning it to victory by sheer force of intelligence. Melodrama, if you will; but melodrama informed by an intellectual perception never before seen in plays of this class. Well, the "problem" becomes uncontrollable, for, with

the help of a document opportunely supplied by the heroine as a moral test, the spy is master of the field, and the false despatch is almost on the wires, when he repents, and does not send it. Surely this is treason! What would the dead brother have said? Perhaps this idea is in Mr. Gillette's mind, for, instead of escaping, he returns to the house where his brother lies dead, is captured, tried by drum-head court-martial, and ordered to be shot out of hand. Finding that by a most ingenious device the bullets have been extracted from the cartridges of the firing party by the sympathetic negro, he quietly tells this to the sergeant in command, and is about to meet his death, when the military governor of Richmond announces that his life has been spared because the false despatch was not sent. By this time I am aware that the "problem" has got me down, and is sitting on me! Would the tender-hearted Jefferson Davis have dealt so leniently with Mr. Gillette? Would he not have remitted the spy with his compliments to General Grant, to be shot for having yielded to treacherous compunction? Anyway, when the war is over, and Mr. Gillette has married his Southern heroine, how will he tell the story to his comrades-in-arms, and what will they think of him? I give it up; but of this I am certain, that Mr. Gillette's play is a triumph of American authorship and American acting. It is written with a subdued eloquence which never touches a false note, and makes the accent of the company—notably of a gallant Southern boy who wants to go to the front—like music in a Cockney ear.

There is no subdued eloquence in *A Court of Honour* at the Royalty. The rhetoric of Mr. John Lart and Mr. Charles Dickinson is strung to the highest pitch. The people of the drama tell one another allegories through four acts. "Nature," exclaims the heroine, "is the only author who writes life-like dramas on the world's stage." I wish Mr. Lart and Mr. Dickinson had collaborated with Nature. The play is overloaded with what the footman in the *Dancing Girl* called "persiflash." One of the minor characters relates that his grandfather, an admiral, lost both arms in battle. The family courage is now represented by somebody "who wrote a play, and has been in receipt of alms ever since." "Arms" and "alms"! O Nature! O Messrs. Lart and Dickinson! Still, the play is not without force. A brave officer of the Indian army has unwittingly committed bigamy. Wife number one, a monster, told wife number two, who ran away, leaving her child, as she supposed, at the point of death. Years later, the husband, now a free man, returns to England in search of his child's mother, and finds her about to marry his oldest friend. She is deaf to his appeal because he does not tell her that the child is living. Had Nature been consulted, this obviously imperative information would have been given, and Mr. Lart and his colleague would not have written this play. However, the discovery that the child is alive makes a strong scene later, and affords Miss Calhoun an opportunity for effective emotion. Meanwhile, the oldest friend has turned out a dipsomaniac, and the wife confesses that she loves the officer more than ever. "Of course, she will run away with him," remarked a lady, sitting behind me, "and all will end happily." No such violation of the moral code blemishes *A Court of Honour*. The last scene, indeed, is rather impressive, for the officer (Mr. Fred Terry) unfolds to a tribunal composed of Miss Calhoun, the dipsomaniac (picturesquely represented by Mr. Abingdon), and a friendly doctor, the exceeding virtue of his whole behaviour. The dipsomaniac has a paralytic stroke; the officer goes off with his regiment to India; the heroine will be a widow in a few months; and—well, I hope the lady behind me felt properly rebuked!

Mdlle. Jane May's *matinée* programme at the Royalty presumes a little on the simplicity of the Londoner. On Monday I witnessed a singular entertainment. First came a farce (very badly acted), in which two ladies quarrelled about a man, who fell full length at the door, and because they laughed at this mishap, solemnly remarked that he would marry a woman who could sympathise with him in such a calamity. The audience received this with stupefaction. Then came, of all the antiquities of the drama, George Sand's *La Petite Fadette*, which would seem ancient and insipid to any intelligent British nursery, though I observed a French matron in a box weeping copiously. Finally, we had a real taste of Mdlle. Jane May's quality in *A Ce Soir*, in which this vivacious actress sang delightfully (from the front row of the dress circle), imitated Sarah Bernhardt, and told a moderately amusing anecdote in the inevitable dumb show. I notice that the bill has since been somewhat modernised. This is well, for although the Jubilee makes us all young again, it does not transport us back to infancy.

Mr. John Hare has re-appeared at the Court in the *Hobby Horse*. This piece belongs to Mr. Pinero's experimental stage, and is a queer compound of serious interest and extravagant farce. It has a very skilful and diverting imbroglio, but as the upshot of this is the discomfiture and mortification of a manly young clergyman who has innocently made love to a married woman, the joke leaves one with a wry face. However, Mr. Hare is delightful in anything, and his portrait of the infatuated noodle who keeps a home for jockeys, and is swindled by obvious impostors, becomes delicate comedy. Miss May Harvey, who succeeds to the part originally played by Mrs. Kendal, is an admirable artist; but I wish she would remember that "hwhat" is an error, unless accompanied by an Irish brogue.

L. F. A.

VAN BEERS AND MENPES.

THE two exhibitions which are now open, the one in the Galleries of the Fine Art Society and the other at Messrs. Dowdeswell's, give us, in a concise form, the gains and the losses of the new art, which has the photograph, rather than the old-fashioned drawing, for its backbone. Neither Mr. Van Beers nor Mr. Menpes is conceivable without the camera. Mr. Van Beers is almost totally devoid of the colour-sense, and he has nothing to say. We are assured in a preface to the catalogue that a sense of fun may be found in these melancholy little panels; and I regret that, with the best will in the world, I cannot find it. The boy in the Eton jacket, playing the flute behind a background of yellow, remains a sealed book to me; and the wooden grin of the polychrome Pierrots is not only boring, but distinctly depressing. The catalogue further assures us that Mr. Van Beers is "as sternly opposed to anything which he considers approaching licentiousness in art as the most rigid Puritan among us." In face of a lady in black stockings and pink garters, we are forced to the conclusion that the rigid Puritan and Mr. Van Beers must have different standards of taste in these matters. I have seen most of the pictures now exhibited before at intervals, and I have always hoped that I should never have to see them again. But the circling years bring round the same inevitable flat champagne, with a solemn recommendation from the waiter, as if we didn't know it, and weren't sick of it.

But, to quit the "humorous" pictures in the exhibition, Mr. Van Beers shows himself, in his portrait of M. Rochefort, to be an executant of the greatest dexterity. M. Rochefort told me that he had only sat to the artist for a photograph, and this is the instructive and interesting fact about the art of Mr. Van Beers. Strangely enough, it is an aspect on which Mr. Spielmann does not touch. Some years ago, Mr. Van Beers won a

case in the French courts against someone who had charged him with painting a picture called "The Yacht *La Sirène*" on a photograph. The paint was rubbed off in places, and no photograph was found. This was held by the court to disprove the assertion. In reality it proved nothing, as the very slight film which can be put on a canvas or panel is taken up by the paint, and could not be traced by the rough-and-ready method of rubbing the paint off with chloroform. The probability, however, is strongly against the idea that an artist of the freedom and ability of Mr. Van Beers would make use of a photograph in the manner indicated. I have myself had occasion to paint portraits from photographs, and the method pursued is this. The photograph is carefully traced on to the panel, and then pinned up beside the easel, and painted from, with the same freedom which an artist would use in painting from a drawing. A mechanic, who was not a trained draughtsman and painter might succeed in making a timidly-coloured painting *on* a photograph, but no artist would willingly hamper himself in this manner. The question is what can be got by these methods in the ablest hands. Saving of time; the possibility of painting portraits of people who are dead, or who cannot give sittings; and nearly as much accuracy of form as the given photograph may contain. But colour, in the real sense of the word, there is none. Mr. Van Beers's pictures, though they may have been painted from nature, have the colouring of coloured photographs, and that is what is bad about them, and what makes them look like the decorations of a Belgian dentist's waiting-room. The Rochefort is a marvel of characterisation; but, without seeing the original photograph by the side of the picture, it would be difficult to say what has been gained by translation into polychrome.

The case of Mr. Menpes is very different. Mr. Menpes is a pupil of Whistler, with an eye for colour, and something to say. In the business of showman he has gone one better than Mr. Whistler, and I hope Mr. Whistler likes the affiliated arrangements, the salmon walls, the felt carpet, the *velarium*, and the whole bag of tricks. The effect of the show is a little bewildering. You feel as if someone was going to give you laughing gas; and after several members of the firm have assured you of the excellence of Mr. Menpes's work in tones bordering on emotion, you are either vanquished or alarmed, according to your individual temperament. Fortunately, a critic is neither, and I soon discovered that Mr. Menpes had painted some very interesting pictures among the many which must go to make up what I believe is called a "one-man show."

Playing on stringed instruments are four Japanese women in a row, touched from without by the silver of the twilight, and from within by the gold of the house-light, which is really excellent. The picture is called "Fire-fairies," and numbered 22. Earlier in the exhibition is a picture called "The Foundry Kitchen" (12), which again is excellent. Whatever it was done from, the result has style and delicacy, and is a beautiful work of art. In many of the little pictures of different workmen at their avocations Mr. Menpes shows a sense of colour and a love for his material, though the faults of a too-great dependence on photography are very insistent. Largely, the result may be said to be an absence of sufficient motive for every picture, and, sometimes, laboured elaboration which makes a subtle discord with the momentary movements depicted. Nor are the planes invariably explicit. A highly modelled head will come out of a robe that appears flat, and so on. If Mr. Menpes would abjure photography for a while, and only give us of his best, the result would be more interesting. But he could not fill the show-rooms of Messrs. Dowdeswell so often, and he would probably not make his fortune.

If we have, in these two exhibitions, the camera, in the service, first of a man with considerable technical skill, and secondly of a man with taste and a sense of colour, with curiosity and ingenuity, what will be the nature of the flood of work, which must soon accrue, by students who have none of these qualities, and who will press forward on the short cut that they think they see? Firstly, it will be found that it is only a very small percentage who can use the new machine with such effect. Neither Van Beers nor Menpes is *le premier venu*. There will follow a flood of camera-born paintings which in their monotony, their platitude, their absence of all imagination and personality, will no more take the place of pure painting than photography has supplanted pure drawing. A large class of workers will necessarily be eliminated. All those artists who are trying to do by hand what can be done better by the camera will go. And that will be no loss, but a gain, and a clearing of the ground. ST. P.

THE SITUATION IN THE EAST.

CONSTANTINOPLE, May 15th.

IT is evident from Lord Salisbury's speech that his idea of the object of the Concert of Europe differs *in toto* from ours. He says that its primary object was to prevent a European war. Our idea, in Constantinople, was that the Great Powers had agreed together to regulate the affairs of the Turkish Empire, to save the civilisation and the Christian nationalities of the East from destruction by limiting the power of the Sultan. In former speeches Lord Salisbury himself has certainly taken this view of the Concert. But now the secret is out, and we are called upon to rejoice over the happy result. It is true that there has been no European war thus far—but it is also true that the Christian civilisation of the East has been destroyed, that Free Greece has been ruined, that at least a hundred thousand lives have been sacrificed, that the power of the Sultan has been fostered and developed until he is in a position to defy Europe, that the hopes of enlightened Turks have been destroyed and a new spirit of fanaticism stirred up in the Moslem world. Is this a happy result of the Concert of Europe? Shall we rejoice over it? It is a great price to pay for two years of armed truce in Europe, none the less that it has been paid with our brothers' blood and not our own. It is not exactly safe even for a Concert of Europe to leave God out of the account, or to imagine that Eternal Justice concerns itself only with the interests of the six Powers.

One does not need to be either a Prime Minister or a prophet to foresee that a day of vengeance is coming. There is no such loving harmony among the Powers as Lord Salisbury represents. The settlement of the Eastern Question has not advanced a single step. Not a problem has been solved. The situation is not less, but more, critical than it was two years ago, and it is a curious fact that the Turks have a clearer idea of this than Lord Salisbury seems to have. They look upon the war with Greece as only a prelude to something far more important. They have different opinions as to exactly what this will be, and their reasoning may not be very convincing, but I believe that the instinct of the Turk in this case is truer than the representations of Lord Salisbury. At any rate, he is as important a factor in the case as Lord Salisbury, and he is certain to be guided by his instinct rather than by Western logic. The general impression is that there will soon be war with Russia. It may be that with some this comes only from the fact that a war with Russia is expected about once in twenty years. Others give importance to the visit of the Emperor of Austria to St. Petersburg. Others are sure that in the end the Czar will avenge the Orthodox Greeks. But a more significant suggestion is that the Sultan is strong enough now to throw off the mask of

pretended friendship with Russia and assert his independence. The military party, strong in its faith in the German alliance, is in favour of defying Europe at once and holding on to Thessaly—and, some say, Crete too. The German control and direction of the Greek war has been so complete that the common language of the Turkish headquarters has been German, so that it is not strange that their alliance is regarded as a sure one. Others point to the fact that the mobilisation of the army still continues, and that preparations for war are still going on everywhere. But while a war with Russia is the event generally expected, the war which the Turks would prefer would be a war with England to drive her out of Egypt. The hatred of England is now intense and universal. I have never seen anything like it before. There is no reason in it and no limit to it. If the newly acquired influence of the Sultan as Caliph can stir up trouble in Egypt or in India, the opportunity will not be lost. Too much importance should not be given to the details of "coffee-house babble," but these expressions of opinion show what is the spirit of the people at the present time.

The question of the day is that of the fate of Greece and Crete, and even the friends of Greece in England do not seem to appreciate the gravity of it. It is believed here, in diplomatic circles, that the negotiations will be long and difficult, and that they may end in the complete triumph of the Sultan, the utter ruin of Greece, and the re-enslavement of Crete. The Turks expect to hold Thessaly, and have already re-established their government in the Province. The Turkish papers this week announce the appointment of *Caimakams* for the principal towns and Customs House officials for the ports. They are still sending troops there. They expect that the promised autonomy of Crete will leave them in practical possession of the island. They believe that Germany will stand by them to the end, and that the Western Powers will continue to submit to her dictation. As no one knows the mind of the Sultan it is impossible to foresee how far these hopes and expectations are to be realised, but, since Lord Salisbury's speech, it is clear that if the Sultan stands firm he will carry his point as usual. It is well known that Izzet Bey is anxious for peace, but it is not certain that he has regained his influence over the Sultan, although he has nominally been restored to favour. The military party, backed by Germany, is certainly in the ascendant now, and will insist on yielding nothing. Two or three weeks ago the Sultan expressed his willingness to make peace on favourable terms, but it may be that even then he was not sincere, and since that time the circumstances have changed. It seems more likely that he will stand by his guns and complete the destruction of Greece.

Poor Greece! for long the pet and pride of the Western world, and the hope of all the oppressed nationalities of the East—now trodden under the heel of the Moslem, without a friend to save her! And yet Greece was never more worthy of sympathy and support than now. The Greeks had made more progress in civilisation, in sobriety and good sense, in moral character, during the past fifteen years than in all their previous history, when they were driven by the machinations of the Great Powers and their own sympathies into this hopeless struggle with Turkey. She can never recover the position which she has lost. The decree has gone out from Petersburg that the Slav and not the Greek is to rule the East; that despotism rather than liberty, that Russian rather than Western civilisation is to dominate this part of the world. Something might still be done to save Greece from utter ruin, to enable her to maintain her national life within her narrow boundaries and keep alive at least a spark of liberty in the East; but there is a depth of humiliation from which a small and friendless State cannot rise, and the present danger is that this is to be the fate of Greece. It will be an eternal shame to the Western Powers if they give this satisfaction to the Sultan and the Emperors.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"THE SECRET ROSE."

DEAR SIR,—Owing to the fact that I have been travelling about, I have only just got THE SPEAKER of May the 8th with your review of "The Secret Rose." I hope your reviewer will not think me ungrateful for his generous praise if I reply to one or two of his criticisms of fact. He objects to my descriptions of the Irish monks in "The Crucifixion of the Outcast," and says "the old Irish monks stood for gentleness and peace in a cruel and savage age." "The Crucifixion of the Outcast" is founded upon an eleventh century Irish romance, and follows its original very closely; nor is the old romance the only witness upon my side, for Giraldis Cambrensis speaks of the fierceness of our very saints, and explains it by the great difficulty they had in preserving their property in so violent a land. Nor is your reviewer more correct in saying that when I make "the Prior" look "for judgment to a saint instead of to the King of Saints" I commit "the error of an Irish Protestant." I am far away from books, and so cannot quote my authorities; but it is certainly true that Irish Christianity fell from its first simplicity in the century before the coming of the Danes, and that many of the religious communities looked to be judged by their founders, who had, perhaps, in some places but stepped into the shoes of local gods. "The Crucifixion of the Outcast" is, I claim, a fairly true picture, though history was no part of my purpose, of certain things and emotions in that time of decadence. It is one of several stories in my book about Irish saints and monks, and is the only one in which my story, and the symbolism which is the heart of my story, compelled me to emphasise their fierceness rather than their ecstasy and piety.—Yours very sincerely,

Sligo, May 18th. W. B. YEATS.

THE SCYTHE.

MAY-DAISIES, bending to the breeze,
And swaying in a sparkling shower,
Yielding your slender necks to please
The soft persuasions of the hour;
From each to each you send a whispered word
That moves you in such sudden white accord.

Alas! your stars of life are low;
For even now a lightning-stroke
Plays in the distance to and fro.
Was it a warning that you spoke?
No. Never hint of cold impending death
Thrilled through the wooing of the west wind's breath.

Erect and smiling to the sun,
The passing cloud, the wind and rain,
Have left you, when their course was run,
Rejoicing in your greater gain.
Not one of Nature's moods your trust betrays;
For sorrow visits you but once—and slays.

HELEN CHISHOLM.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

TEMPERAMENT.

"I forgot if I said that Stevenson had never attempted to deal with moral ideas, or that he had failed to deal with them. All writers more or less surreptitiously, more or less ineffectually, have dealt in moral ideas; even in the eighteenth century it would be impossible to find a writer who could be declared to be quite free from suspicion of them . . . . The business of the novelist is to exhibit, not to state. So it is of little importance that Stevenson attempted to deal with moral ideas in 'Will of the Mill' and 'Markheim.' The question is, Did he succeed in exhibiting a moral idea?"

MR. MOORE'S original accusation was that Stevenson's whole art lay in a trick of language, and that he perceived nothing but the visible world. Mr. Moore now admits that Stevenson

dabbled in moral ideas, but contends that he perceived them but trivially and dealt with them inadequately. He admits, for instance, that "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is a deliberate allegorising of a moral idea; but contends that "if Stevenson had been a great writer he would not have had recourse to diabolic agency," whereas, "as it stands, 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde' is a piece of bookstall literature quite unworthy of serious attention." He is silent upon "Will of the Mill," which I analysed with the purpose of showing that it was deliberately built upon a moral idea; but I gather that he would condemn it almost as roundly. "The Master of Ballantrae" he has read, but makes no comment on. The poems he neglects. Of the volumes of essays he prefers "Virginibus Puerisque" to "Across the Plains," but adds that he got no intellectual enchantment from it. It enlivened him as a band might (and that's something). He thinks of it as he might of "an elegantly furnished drawing-room, where there was light laughter and ladies, happily turned remarks and exquisite pastry that melted in the mouth." At this point, in so far as it concerns Stevenson, I think we may leave the dispute. It is clear that for Mr. Moore and me Stevenson has quite different charms, both in quality and degree. If Stevenson's writings even reminded me of light laughter and ladies, and pastry that melted in the mouth, I might now be speaking of him even as Mr. Moore speaks; might even be calling him "the best-dressed young man that ever walked in the Burlington Arcade." But, to be short, they never did. And Mr. Moore will probably agree with me that a dispute prolonged upon this particular author between two who feel his charm so differently can only end in logomachy, or at best in vain questioning—"Do you see this?" "Don't you feel that?" and so forth.

It seems to me, at least, that we shall be doing a more useful service to ourselves (if to nobody else) by putting Stevenson aside and helping each other on the general question, though I may pause for a moment to suggest that Mr. Moore is mistaken in one small inference. He remarks that—

> "the newspaper controversy and general irritation which my article caused in Scotland can be attributed to but one cause—viz. that I gave utterance to a truth hidden in the background of the mind—in the sub-conscious—a truth which everyone knew, but which no one dared or had learned how to express. . . . When a hidden truth is dragged up to the light the world is shocked and angered, for the world lives in involuntary falsehood; the world is inarticulate; not one man in ten millions says what he thinks, and not because he would not, but because he cannot. . . . So the anger that my article excited was the natural anger of every reader against himself, the anger kindled by the fear that he had been lying to himself."

Let me suggest an alternative, more commonplace, hypothesis. May not this "irritation caused in Scotland" ("God bless the Duke of Argyle!") be due to another cause—viz. the fine unwillingness of Scotsmen to allow anybody but themselves to depreciate a brother Scot? I believe that a very large number of solid burgesses beyond the Tweed admire Stevenson quite as little as Mr. Moore does: but—moral idea or no moral idea—they accept no interference from a Southron. As for the lesser irritation in the southern parts of Great Britain, I can assure Mr. Moore that I (for one) have been moved rather by the desire that he should see good in Stevenson than by the fear that we were to be made blind to it.

To come, now, to the general, and—as I conceive—the only valuable part of the discussion. Mr. Moore has a passion, just now, for "moral ideas" in fiction. He is not the first novelist or critic who has felt that passion. As a matter of fact, the writers of that eighteenth century which he derides, felt and proclaimed it just as strongly as he does; but in practice, owing to prevailing rules of criticism which we have outgrown or at least modified, they inclined to state the moral idea in their fiction rather than to exhibit it. "Rasselas," for instance, is a deliberate exposition of a moral idea: Richardson's three great novels are deliberate expositions of moral ideas, and by "moral" of course I don't mean goody-goody. Nor, as far as success in presentation goes, would I for a moment compare the two Samuels with Tolstoi, for instance. I merely claim that, in intention, these men were full of the moral idea; and I think this claim will be allowed by anyone who remembers the kind of preface which went with a work of fiction in the last century. Again, while I was a boy Mr. Ruskin was preaching that *all* art depended on moral ideas. Then came a time when one had to listen and hear the contrary affirmed with even more volubility and assurance—art was non-moral, art was its own justification, and the rest. The other day I turned up a little essay by Mr. Henry James on Ivan Turgénieff, with its description of the Sunday *cénacles* in Flaubert's little room in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré—

> "What was discussed in that little smoke-clouded room was chiefly questions of taste, questions of art and form; and the speakers, for the most part, were in æsthetic matters radicals of the deepest die. It would have been late in the day to propose among them any discussion of the relation of art to morality, any question as to the degree in which a novel might or might not concern itself with the teaching of a lesson. They had settled these preliminaries long ago, and it would have been primitive and incongruous to recur to them. The conviction that held them together was the conviction that art and morality are two perfectly different things, and that the former has no more to do with the latter than it has with astronomy or embryology. The only duty of a novel was to be well written; that merit included every other of which it was capable . . . ."

How very old and far off it all seems! And, in a way, how fatuous!—since of these theorisers two were Flaubert and Turgénieff, whom nowadays Mr. Moore is fain to exalt (and rightly) as champions, in practice, of the "moral idea" in fiction. Nevertheless, this was the stuff we had to listen to. It always struck me as mighty poor talk: for fiction is mainly concerned with man's behaviour on this planet, and morality is that which redeems man's behaviour from chaos. From my corner I persistently kept up this note, like an unregarded grasshopper in the arid noon. And now that the reaction is in full swing, and Mr. Moore has found salvation and hymns the moral idea from the house-top, causing irritation in Scotland, it distresses me to have to change the note and pipe that the moral idea, though an excellent thing, is by no means the single end of literature, or even of fiction.

The difference is that Mr. Moore, taking the moral idea for his single touchstone, brings literature to this test and approves or condemns it *à priori*; while I, considering that I have received good and not harm from many books, in which the "moral idea" test can show little worth, seek for another. And I find one in what I have called *truth of temperament*. Mr. Moore is not sure that he apprehends what I mean; but I can see that he is near to apprehending it. I will take four very dissimilar works—Homer's Iliad, The Arabian Nights (Galland's version), Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, and the farces of Labiche. Now I defy you to prove that any one of these (with the possible exception of Labiche's *Moi*) is based upon a moral idea. "The time has come," says Mr. Moore, "to remind the world that great literature cannot be composed from narratives of perilous adventures." Yet this is precisely what Homer did. I am far from denying that all these works have a philosophy of life behind them. All considerable writings have a philosophy of life behind them—whether it be the philosophy of one man as with *As You Like It* and *La Cagnotte*, or the philosophy of a people, as with the Arabian Nights and the Iliad. One lies beneath the hard and brilliant humour of "The Story of the Hunchback"; another beneath the genial and more tender humour of Don Quixote; one ripples the surface of *As You Like It*, and another the surface of *La Cagnotte*. The comedy

may be Aristophanic or Shakespearian; it may be Congreve's or Goldsmith's; but always some ordered view of life lies in the background. So much I cheerfully admit.

But while the philosophy is there, to be the ultimate justification of every man's writing, his writing may be produced at various removes from it, so to speak. A tragedy, for instance, is usually a direct and immediate exposition of a principle of life, of a moral idea. But a man's philosophy goes to colour his temperament, or his temperament to colour his philosophy, and such books as I have instanced are revelations of temperament rather than of philosophy. I could if it were worth while draw up a pretty clear statement of Stevenson's philosophy of life, but I allow that "An Inland Voyage," "Kidnapped," and even "Virginibus Puerisque," are revelations primarily of his temperament. Now it seems to me that a man's temper may be as sincere as his wisdom, and as powerful to charm; yes, and as well worth studying. "He wrote for companionship," says Pater of Montaigne, "'if but one sincere man would make his acquaintance'; speaking on paper, as he 'did to the first person he met.'—'If there be any person, any knot of good company, in France or elsewhere, who can like my humour and whose humours I can like, let them but whistle and I will run!'" For my part, I read books not only to attain instruction, but to make the acquaintance of their authors: and if the author be a sincere man, there is profit in the acquaintance; if he be also a man whom I can like, there is delight. I do not go to Scott for a definite exposition of philosophy: but I know that while I read him I am in the company of a sincere and gentle and moderately wise man; of one in whose company it is good to be.

Observe that I handicap myself in this argument by putting aside all consideration of the merely romantic spirit: for with that, for its own sake, Mr. Moore seems to have absolutely no sympathy. Undoubtedly there is such a thing: undoubtedly it charms, and always has charmed, mankind. But if a man cannot feel a thrill over Crusoe's discovery of the footprint, or the Musketeers' adventure on the bastion of La Rochelle, or the cleaving of the Sultan's kitchen wall and the mysterious answer of the four fish, "Yes, yes: if you reckon, we reckon: if you pay your debts, we pay ours: if you fly, we overcome and are content"—why then it is honest to say so. The man who remains unaffected by this kind of thing lacks a gift and a certain capacity for quite salutary pleasure. But I see no reason why, because we possess a gift so common and inexplicable, we should allow ourselves to be argued into despising it. There is, I suggest, a "moral idea" in La Fontaine's fable of the Fox who had lost his Tail—

"'Que nous sert cette queue? Il faut qu'on se la coupe:
Si l'on me croit, chacun s'y résoudra.'
'Votre avis est fort bon,' dit quelqu'un de la troupe;
'Mais tournez-vous, de grâce, et l'on vous répondra.'"

A. T. Q. C.

REVIEWS.

A LADY'S TRAVELS IN WEST AFRICA.

TRAVELS IN WEST AFRICA, CONGO FRANÇAIS, CORISCO, AND CAMEROONS. By Mary H. Kingsley. London: Macmillan & Co.

A CHARGE of diffuseness and of a tendency to wander from the point might be brought against the author of this delightful book by the casual reader. In reality, however, Miss Kingsley knows well all through her book where she is, and tells the story of her travels, at some length perhaps, but clearly and above all racily, and without taking herself too seriously. One thing, indeed, is quite clear. All the accepted ideas as to the limits of endurance of what is commonly called the weaker sex must undergo a complete revision. Perhaps, however, it is unfair to Miss Kingsley to generalise as to the whole sex from her individual achievements, for it is very doubtful whether there exists another woman who could or would have put up with the unspeakable physical discomforts which Miss Kingsley encountered, simply for the sake of adding something to our knowledge of two subjects which to the ordinary feminine mind must look unattractive enough—fish and fetish.

The West Coast of Africa, if we are to believe Miss Kingsley, which it is difficult not to do, exercises a strange fascination over all those who live long enough on it to get to know it. To this charm Miss Kingsley succumbed during a short voyage she made to the Coast in 1893, and she determined to return at the earliest opportunity. This opportunity came in December, 1894, and the present volume is an account of her journey, which occupied rather more than a year, starting from Liverpool and ending with her safe return to Victoria, after ascending the Great Peak of Cameroons. Of all that she has to tell us as to what befell her during that time it is impossible to give an adequate account. Miss Kingsley is an observer of the first rank, and her book is full of ethnological, botanical, geological, and social details and anecdotes, all served up with a sauce of humour which makes them delightful reading for even the least scientific of readers.

The main object of Miss Kingsley's journey was to ascend the Ogowé River in French Congo, the largest river between the Congo and the Niger. She thus hoped not only to be able to obtain a collection of freshwater fish from a river north of the Congo, but also to have abundant opportunities of observing the Fans, a tribe famous for its cannibalism, and as little touched by white influence as any tribe within easy reach of the coast. A word ought to be said of Miss Kingsley's method of travelling, which is in striking contrast to that adopted by other ladies, and, indeed, most men when venturing to explore tropical Africa. Disdaining elaborate preparations for her journey, Miss Kingsley simply goes as she is, without white companions, servant, or fuss of any kind, and takes what comes—roughs it, in short, in the most literal meaning of the word. If a swamp has to be crossed, the possibility of being carried through it does not occur to her; or, more justly speaking, her principles will not allow of her doing anything but wading through it, up to the armpits it may be, as her black men have to do. Consequently her relations with her men were most friendly and natural, and she had opportunities of studying them which never would have come to her had the expedition been of a more imposing character.

After spending some months at various parts of the coast, Miss Kingsley left Glass in the beginning of June and began her journey up the Ogowé. "All day long we steam past ever-varying scenes of loveliness, whose component parts are ever the same, yet the effect ever different. Doubtless it is wrong to call it a symphony, yet I know of no other word to describe the scenery of the Ogowé. It is as full of life, beauty, and passion as any symphony Beethoven ever wrote, the parts changing, interweaving and returning."

Having ascended the river as far as Njolé by steamer, Miss Kingsley set off on her own account in a canoe, with eight natives, to get some experience of the Ogowé rapids above Njolé, and to get some fish. Her account of this little expedition is very interesting and amusing reading; the dangers, which must have been very real, are made light of, and the discomforts and catastrophes recounted with much humour and spirit. But of all that Miss Kingsley has to tell us, nothing is so full of interest and excitement as her journey from Kangwé on the Ogowé through the Fan country, down the Rembwé to the Gaboon. Accompanied only by four natives,

who, so far as she knew, might have killed her at the first chance, but who turned out to be trustworthy enough, she set off in a canoe down the Ogowé, and arrived, after many adventures, at Lake Ncovi. Here in an island village she made her first acquaintance with the Fans, and the account of her landing at the village is thrilling. "Pagan got out on the stones alongside the canoe just as the inhabitants became aware of our arrival, and abandoning what I hope was a mass meeting to remonstrate with the local authorities on the unsanitary state of the town, came—a brown mass of naked humanity—down the steep cliff path to attend us, whom they evidently regarded as an imperial interest. Things did not look restful, nor these Fans personally pleasant. Every man among them—no woman showed—was armed with a gun, and they loosened their shovel-shaped knives in their sheaths as they came, evidently regarding a fight quite as imminent as we did. . . . Indeed, I must say that never—even in a picture—have I seen such a set of wild, wicked-looking savages as those we faced this night, and with whom it was touch and go, for twenty of the longest minutes I have ever lived, whether we fought—for our lives I was going to say, but it would not have been even for that, but merely for the price of them." One would willingly go on quoting Miss Kingsley indefinitely. No other words than her own would fittingly describe the charms of a night spent in a Fan hut or the delights of a midnight paddle alone in a Fan canoe, during which she "dropped in on a hippo. banquet," and finished up by having a bath in the lake.

Having proceeded as far as possible by water, the little party, accompanied by three Fans as guides, took to the forest, and in spite of swamps, traps, pits, and such-like difficulties, safely reached Agonjo, on the Rembwé. During this march Miss Kingsley, who owns to being no sportswoman and to having a proper fear of wild animals loose in the forest, was fortunate enough to see a herd of five elephants disporting themselves in a mud bath, and afterwards a family of five gorillas enjoying life in the privacy of the great forest, the animals being quite unconscious of her scrutiny. With the canoe journey down the Rembwé ended the main part of Miss Kingsley's travels. She, however, made two other little expeditions, one to Corisco Island, and the other to the top of Mungo Mah Lobeh, the Great Peak of Cameroons. This last exploit was fraught with more impossible difficulties than all the rest of her travels put together. But with indomitable pluck Miss Kingsley overcame them all, and seems to have enjoyed herself immensely in spite of being nearly drowned and contracting "the most awful cold in the head of modern times."

A large and important section of the book is devoted to the discussion of fetish. Miss Kingsley has a very genuine sympathy with the native habit of mind and thought. She is not horrified beyond expression because the African is a polygamist, because his wives are sometimes killed to accompany him to his long home, because he abhors twins and the wife who bears them. She realises that he has an underlying idea which explains his actions and beliefs, and should make us regard him not as a mere brute with wantonly cruel instincts, but as a human being to whom we must show sympathy and understanding if we wish to do anything with him. She compares her position when travelling among the Fans to that of a mountaineer walking on the edge of a precipice with a sheer wall of rock on the other side of him. She tells us she has been through "bits of country where you walk along a narrow line of security with gulfs of murder looming on each side, and . . . where you are as safe as if you were in your easy-chair at home as long as you get sufficient holding ground, not on a rock in the bush village inhabited by murderous cannibals, but on ideas in those men's and women's minds; and these ideas, which I think I may say you will always find, give you safety. It is not advisable to play with them because you regard them as superstitious; and never, never shoot too soon. . . . As for flourishing a revolver and threatening to fire, I hold it utter idiocy." Those on whom rests the responsibility for the right administration of West Africa would do well to read Miss Kingsley's book. Much blundering and many future catastrophes might be avoided if the right training, and some knowledge of the native mind and customs, were insisted on in those who go to administer this or, indeed, any part of Africa. Of no little value also are Miss Kingsley's observations on the trade and labour problems in West Africa.

There is, however, one serious omission in the book: it contains no map. Consequently the reader finds it simply impossible to follow the exact route taken by Miss Kingsley in her journey up the Ogowé and across country to the Rembwé. The latter river, and more than half the towns and villages mentioned, are not even marked on the most modern map we have been able to consult. The omission is as inexplicable as it is unpardonable, and is not creditable to a house of the reputation of Messrs. Macmillan; it should certainly be supplied in a new edition. But, except for the want of a map, Miss Kingsley's account of her travels is perhaps the most interesting, as it certainly is the freshest and raciest, record of African experiences published in recent years.

MR. BOOTH'S RESULTS.

LIFE AND LABOUR OF THE PEOPLE IN LONDON. Edited by Charles Booth. Volume IX. Comparisons, Survey and Conclusions. London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd.

THE ninth volume of Mr. Booth's great work is a most instructive example of what is really meant by scientific sociology. London alone has been his theme; eight volumes and about as many years have been taken up by the collection and condensation of materials for his inductions; and now he and Mr. Ernest Aves distil from the statistics, partly furnished by the census returns, partly collected and subjected to preliminary treatment by a devoted band of helpers, a number of tolerably definite generalisations; and yet he has of necessity left untouched the great staple trades of the country, which are provincial, and has had to confine himself, practically, to the wage-earning classes of the capital. Moreover, the next census will bring a new set of statistics and afford an opportunity for anybody who may feel inclined to do the work all over again. We think of the manuals of sociology that compass the history of mankind from the cave-dwellers to the factory system in four hundred pages or so, and then reflect on the extremely slight bases of evidence on which most of their conclusions must rest, compared with Mr. Booth's. Of course, their generalisations have their own value. But we feel more than ever that they are preliminary syntheses rather than scientific results. Mr. Booth suggests that the work he and his staff have done for London might be extended to the whole country under the direction of the Board of Trade. It would be of enormous value; but we doubt if anyone would have the energy to do it properly except volunteers.

Mr. Booth's object, he tells us, is to obtain "an opinion, based on the facts disclosed, as to the actual condition in which the population of London lives and the opportunities which their lives afford"; and it is this question, or group of questions, which is answered by the volume before us. How many of the population are crowded and poor, and why; in which trades poverty and crowding are greatest (they go together, though only with large exceptions); what trades are in the hands mainly of the born Londoner, and what is likely to become of him; what sort of shifting takes place between trades; which trades are

increasing and which decreasing; the position of London as an industrial centre; the characteristics of London labour, its remuneration, and the causes affecting this latter; and the standards of life of the labouring population. Such are some of the subjects here dealt with, while the next volumes are to treat of the way in which the existing poverty is affected by social action, organised and unorganised—*e.g.* by charity on the one hand, or by drink and early marriages on the other.

It will be seen that the list of subjects dealt with (and we have not mentioned them all) is in itself formidable enough. A review of the volume which should do it justice would probably exceed it in length, and we despair of even summarising adequately any of Mr. Booth's most interesting but highly condensed chapters, much more of expounding his admirably graphic diagrams. We can only call attention to a few points among the multitude.

The very striking chapters on London as a centre of industry remind us of a fact that we are too apt to forget. London is pre-eminent—as a group of varied factories; in some degree as a "repairing and fitting shop." It has an immense preponderance in population, and therefore in effective demand; it is a world-market; it has abundant labour (mostly indeed of the highest and lowest, rather than of any intermediate type); and (though the born Londoner seems generally to gravitate to the inner ring of crowded districts, and to tend downwards) yet either from historical or economic or other special reasons, it has secured a great variety of trades which it is never likely to lose. London is so many other things besides a producing centre, that the description comes on the average reader with a certain surprise. So perhaps may the conclusion that the day of the small employer is not yet over, and in many trades never will be. And, though Mr. Booth naturally has much to say in favour of trade union action, his chapter on it rather qualifies our admiration. In some cases, he thinks, the unions really are driving away trade; in some cases they are themselves dragged down by the preponderance of inefficient men (as where 7½ per cent. of the members receive 50 per cent. of the out-of-work pay); in some cases the "trade union wage" has made employment less regular—and irregularity of employment is the root of many evils; and the plan of "ca' canny"—inadequate work given for inadequate pay—is merely suicidal; more product, *therefore* more possibility of pay, is the true policy. And the chapter on the difficulties of ascertaining the "minimum wage" may also supply social reformers with much rather unpalatable food for thought. On the evils of irregularity in employment so much stress is laid that one cannot help thinking the ideal of some reformers may come to be that which Mr. Booth takes care to disclaim—for every man to get into a groove in youth and stay there. That was the ideal of some ancient Greek thinkers; happily modern conditions render its realisation improbable. But shifting now takes place extensively. "A very large number of people necessarily change their trade at least once"; but they mostly change because they cannot help it. The ideal suggested by some American economists—of a state of machine production in which, because every man will be some kind of machinist, every man will be able to go to some rather similar kind of machine minding when his original employment fails him — is as yet a long way off.

Indeed, the most definite of the broad general impressions we get from the book is—that there is no such thing as "labour" in the abstract, except in an abstract world. What we really find is highly differentiated labour, with conditions under which labourers are selected for personal and individual qualities as well as for skill, in which the man is the prey of his own individual weaknesses as well as the sport of economic forces. The recognition of this fact is not the least striking feature of this book of elaborate generalisations.

We could go on enumerating Mr. Booth's results indefinitely; but we must content ourselves with referring readers, in conclusion, to his very interesting chapter on "the expenditure and standard of life" of the five grades into which he divides the industrial and quasi-industrial population, and in strongly recommending everyone who is interested in social or economic problems to read and digest his work. This volume can be read alone; for the contents of the preceding eight volumes are given in it, in abstract, to facilitate reference; a convenience for which the thanks of the public are due to the patient labour of Mr. Duckworth, the abstractor. But the whole series of volumes is a monument of patient labour and devotion on the part of Mr. Booth, Mr. Ernest Aves, and other helpers, such as has rarely been applied in so scientific a fashion or given so unsparingly to the attainment of ends which the investigators can only hope to see attained very partially, if at all.

MISS EMILY SOLDENE'S RECOLLECTIONS.

MY THEATRICAL AND MUSICAL RECOLLECTIONS. By Emily Soldene. London: Downey & Son.

MISS SOLDENE'S memoirs are written with engaging frankness, and readers will thank her for setting forth, with an outspokenness which sometimes seems to border on indiscretion, so many interesting particulars about actresses in private life, actresses on the stage, actresses behind the scenes, and actresses's admirers behind the scenes and in the front rows of the stalls. Miss Soldene does not approve of gentlemen being admitted through the stage-door; and she once ordered the expulsion from the theatre of a staring, inquisitive, scrutineering sort of person, who turned out to be the manager. But most of the visitors were such agreeable men! Lord Wallscourt, exquisitely dressed, used to pretend that his delightful waistcoats cost him only ten-and-sixpence apiece, at a ready-made shop; and the present Earl of Dunraven, when he saw Miss Soldene home from the theatre, would sometimes stay to supper, when he opened oysters most artistically and sliced cold beef with the skill of a professional carver. There was a charming *ballerina* at the Alhambra who used to bathe every morning in hot milk, who could exhibit personal photographs and precious jewellery which she had received from various princes, and who died in abject poverty at Marseilles, where she had become a dancer at a sailors' tavern; and there was a chorus girl at the Philharmonic Theatre who had three dukes at her beck and call.

Some of the green-room *habitués* were far from being distinguished by that generosity which made the Prince de Guémené and Count de Lauragais so popular with the *corps de ballet* of the Paris Opera House in the last days of the Old Monarchy; and a dismal and almost squalid picture is presented of a certain lord who, in ancient clothes, with hat to match, brought one afternoon to Drury Lane Theatre a fish basket containing dried haddocks and a bottle of brown sherry, with which he proposed to entertain "at tea" the ladies of the ballet. This same aristocrat brought back with him from India (where he had been travelling in the suite of the Prince of Wales) a sackful of the cheapest bangles, which, with lavish hand, he distributed among the ballet-girls of the Avenue Theatre. Such jingling, however, when the dancing began, was caused by this wild act of prodigality that the stage-manager ordered the bangles to be no longer worn.

As a mere matter of literary expression, Miss Soldene writes best when not writing about the theatre; the joyful recollections of which are too much for her, and carry her, in ecstatic moments, beyond the ordinary proprieties of style. In her chapter on New Zealand she gives an amusing

account of the windiness of Wellington: "They say all the wind in the world goes to New Zealand, and all the wind in New Zealand to Wellington; and everybody knows a man from Wellington, because, no matter what part of the earth he is in, he always ducks and claps his hand to his hat when turning a corner." She thus describes the stormy opening of a passage across the Atlantic: "The wind for days blew and howled. The sea ran after us in high mountains, and, catching us up, fell on the deck in great floods. The sky was grey and the clouds rushed along in dark, gusty masses. Every now and then the ship took a header, then sprang up with a sickening bound, skimmed the tops of the waves like a swallow, shook, shivered, vibrated, and, shaking the water from her shining sides, down she went again."

The book is full of observation, and buoyant with animal spirits from beginning to end. To English playgoers, however, the most engaging chapters will certainly be those which relate the goings on at the various London theatres where, from time to time, during a long and brilliant career, Miss Soldene was engaged. But the grand tour for successful actresses and vocalists, as for successful pieces of all kinds, includes America and Australia as well as all parts of England; and wherever Miss Soldene travels she is followed by London memories. She is, too, surprised, now and then, by falling in with some once wealthy "chappie" who, having come to grief in England, has gone in search of new luck to a new land, or some aristocratic "Johnnie" who, after marrying a pretty chorus girl, has been driven into temporary exile by diminished supplies and the inappeasable anger of his father the earl.

Some errors occur in the spelling of proper names which it would be as well to correct in the future editions sure to be called for. "Holm," for example, instead of "Home" (the eminent spiritualist); "J. L. Davidson" for "J. W. Davison" (the *Times*' musical critic); and in one place "Agnes Robinson" for "Agnes Robertson"—afterwards Mrs. Dion Boucicault.

EUROPE UNDER METTERNICH.

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN EUROPE, FROM THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA TO THE PRESENT TIME. By Charles M. Andrews, Associate Professor of History in Bryn Mawr College. London and New York: Putnam's.

In the comprehensive history of which this volume is a first instalment Professor Andrews has undertaken a considerable task. Beginning with the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, he surveys in turn every field of European politics, and traces all the important movements in political thought and action which have contributed to create the Europe of to-day. The bulk of his first volume is composed of a careful study of the period between the Congress of Vienna and the revolutionary outbreaks of the famous year 1848, and it may be described as the history of Metternich's experiment to rule Europe and to check reform and freedom by an adroit use of that mischievous and inefficient weapon known in these days as the Concert of the Powers. There never was a stronger object lesson than that offered by the years which followed Waterloo, in the efficacy of a combination of the Powers for purposes of autocracy and repression, and in their dangerous futility for any purpose which involves national or political reform. Happily, England and France realised in time that, on the pretext of preserving European peace, they were being made the catspaw of the reactionary Powers of Europe. They broke away from the imposing Concert; the immediate result was Hellenic independence, and the ultimate result was the establishment of freedom in Italy, and to some extent in Prussia too. The story of the slow and painful triumph of liberal ideas over the system which Metternich had elaborated with so much strength and skill, is, though not completed in this volume, the story which Professor Andrews has to tell.

In its methods this book is an able example of the new school of historical research. It is the essence of impartiality and moderation. It is concerned less with individuals than with movements and ideas. It takes a wide survey of all the political influences at work in Europe, without excessive regard to limitations of countries or of reigns. Its object is to analyse the science rather than to present the drama of history, and save in so far as they elucidate this science, personal elements are rigorously shut out of view. Of course, by this method, the narrative loses something of colour and romance; but it gains immensely in breadth and independence. We do not suggest that Professor Andrews does less than justice to the personages engaged. Far from it. His pictures of the policy of Metternich and of Mazzini, of Thiers, of Guizot, of Charles Albert and Kossuth, are full of judgment and discrimination. He traces with great lucidity and understanding the vain efforts of Prussia and the more liberal German States to break away from the system which Austria dictated, and a rather pitiful story the story of Prussian vacillation in this period is. He traces sympathetically the vain struggles of Italian patriots to shake off Austrian chains, the premature and melancholy risings, the ill-starred efforts made in Rome, in Naples, in Lombardy, in Venice and Turin. He traces also with remarkable ability the history of the July Monarchy in France, the brief success of Casimir-Périer the elder, the foolish personal policy adopted by the King, the blunders of Guizot and his colleagues, the inevitable collapse of a system which identified itself too much with one class, and which alienated all the rest.

> "The July Monarchy was not overthrown; it crumbled away. In appearance strong, it was in fact wanting in that which alone could give it permanence—a place in the sympathies of the French people."

He traces with clearness and discrimination the complicated movements which followed 1848, the struggle in Hungary and Bohemia, the agitation among the German States, the adroitness with which Austria emerged victorious on every side alike. In his next volume he will have, we hope, a more agreeable tale to tell. We shall be well satisfied if he tells it with equal judgment and success.

The criticisms that we have to make against this volume are nearly all on minor points. We think that Professor Andrews rather underrates the enthusiasm which Napoleon for many years aroused in Germany as the reputed destroyer of feudalism and caste. We think that he is mistaken in dating the deterioration of the French army from as early a date as 1806. The army which marched to Moscow was in almost all respects a splendid force. We doubt if Eugène Beauharnais was ever called Napoleon's "brother," even in the formal intercourse of kings. We cannot reconcile ourselves to mongrel Latinisms like "charta" for charter or carta, or like *Austria redivivus*, which we notice once elsewhere. We find it very hard to reconcile ourselves to some other awkward phrases, which may be familiar in America, but which, we trust, will never become familiar in our English prose. Occasionally, too, the grammar of the sentences strikes us as being far from precise. But on points of style it is, we fear, hopeless to expect that Englishman and Americans should agree; and, in passing any criticism, we are not unmindful of the fact that, though the book deals with a very wide subject, it offers singularly few opportunities for unfavourable comment. We hope that Professor Andrews and his publishers may arrange in the next volume to give us better maps; but, in any case, we shall look forward with high expectations to the appearance of that volume at an early date.

RECENT POETRY AND VERSE.

POEMS. By Louisa Shore. London: John Lane.
AMORIS VICTIMA. By Arthur Symons. London: Smithers.
POEMS. By J. B. Selkirk. Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons.
POEMS. By Robert Loveman. Philadelphia: Lippincott.
AN AUTUMN SINGER. By George Gould. Philadelphia: Lippincott.

"POEMS" by Louisa Shore is an interesting volume of relics. As a poet Miss Shore was a noble failure. Her aim was at a star, and her achievement, falling short of that, was at least a high one. Her sister's work of piety gives us here, with a touching memoir of a gracious and beautiful life, certain noble dramatic fragments, and some lyrics and sonnets which, lacking flexibility and mere grace, yet show the strong stuff of which their writer was made. Miss Shore led an absolutely hidden life, but "stone walls do not a prison make" in the case of a heart and intellect like hers. She discovered for herself an almost revolutionary interest in lost causes, in the midst of such a life as would make any other woman conservative in all her instincts. The noblest of her dramatic fragments, "Olga," has for its heroine a girl of the Russian revolution. The tender womanly and poetic touch which makes her discover in the Czar she is pledged to kill the monarch she could have adored, tempers the strength of the conception with beauty. All these dramatic pieces are full of life and warmth. Mr. Frederic Harrison contributes a discriminating appreciation to these noble fragments.

Mr. Symons's poetry is always admirable in technique; certain exquisite qualities of poise, of swing, of rhythm, with grace and music of expression, are his specially among the younger poets. These qualities are in the new volume, which, happily, in other ways is free from offence, so that one can enjoy its beauties without a recoil of disgust. From his French admirations Mr. Symons has gathered a charm, delicate and exotic, a little artificial too, which is present in this and many another of his lyrics:—

"THE VILLA EMILIA.

"Gates that I never entered, under the shadow of trees—
Gates with the garden discreet behind the wall;
Is it here, O garden discreet; is it here, after all,
Here and behind your gates,
That the love of my life awaits
In a golden sleep, the dawn of my coming, under the trees?

"Under the quiet of trees the garden sleeps in the sun—
Sleeps, and awaits one day a wakening hand;
Is it I, O garden discreet; is it I shall stand
One day at the gate and claim
Your princess in my name?
For she sleeps, and awaits the appointed coming—sleeps in the sun.

"Gates that I never entered, gates of my villa of dreams,
Is there a princess at all that your shadows keep
For her lover, O garden discreet, in a golden sleep?
Ah, if behind your gates
Only a shadow awaits
The shadowy love that I lay at your portals, villa of dreams!"

One is not sure of the very French "discreet," but otherwise the poem is winning, full of elusive charm and dreamy music, and the book has many such. Mr. Symons has no wood-notes wild, but one is satisfied with his little flights of song, no longer than a thrush's or a blackbird's.

Mr. William Archer complains of the minor poets being short-winded, which is somewhat ungrateful. If he comes across Mr. Selkirk, he cannot reproach him with the appellation. Mr. Selkirk would be much better appreciated if his book were a third of the size it is, or even smaller. "Death in Yarrow," for all its Scotch dialect, has a touching charm of its own. From Mr. Selkirk's Yarrow, indeed, one would carry away some sweet impressions if Wordsworth had but left it unvisited. Again and again a little thought fit for a lyric of eight lines is beaten out thin to make eighty. Mr. Selkirk has not known when to be reticent; and of the big volume we can only find one poem satisfactory, and even in that the beat of the music is not always adhered to:—

"Sitting on the breezy height
Of the topmost bough,
Bird, O bird, my bonnie bird,
What singest thou?
What the secret of thy heart,
Tell me, bird, now.

"I have come thy woods among,
All alone here,
Just to give my heart a tongue
Without stint or fear;
Come to sing my soul out,
Bird, where none may hear.

"My song is love, is love, is love;
Bird, what is thine?
A whisper falls, O bonnie bird,
Down the sweet sunshine,
That softly tells me word for word
Thy song is mine.

"O bird, but love is sweet, sweet,
Sweet for me and you.
So sweet that I could sit and sing
A song for ever new.
Could sit beside thee, bonnie bird,
The whole day through."

Mr. Loveman is not long-winded; indeed, his verses are so tiny that one cannot help looking for an epigram or a thought to justify them. But they have none, though they have all the air of saying something. Mr. Loveman has none of the equipment of a poet, though he will not believe it. Certain internal signs reveal that he is very well satisfied with his achievement, and, indeed, he is not often so abject as in "A Lyric" at p. 63.

Mr. Gould is another of those unhappy persons who hanker after the wings of poetry, while, truth to tell, he is very prosaic. One would fain be kinder to these visitors from across the sea, but one can only say that, whatever pleasure "An Autumn Singer" may give to Mr. Gould or his immediate circle, the book has no interest whatsoever for the lover of poetry.

FICTION.

UNCLE BERNAC. A Memory of the Empire. By A. Conan Doyle. London: Smith, Elder & Co.
THE CHRONICLES OF MICHAEL DANEVITCH, OF THE RUSSIAN SECRET SERVICE. By Dick Donovan. London: Chatto & Windus.
YEKL: A TALE OF THE NEW YORK GHETTO. By A. Cahan (Pioneer Series). London: W. Heinemann.

IN "Uncle Bernac" Mr. Conan Doyle continues those studies of the First Empire with which he has associated the name of Brigadier Gerard. In this volume the worthy Brigadier makes his appearance once mere, though it is little beyond a glimpse that we get of him. What we do see is a picture of the great camp at Boulogne in the days when Napoleon was still bent upon conquering England, and of the Emperor himself, with his wife and his satellites around him. Through this picture runs the thread of a personal narrative of adventure concerning one Louis de Laval, the son of an aristocrat and *émigré*, who has returned from England in order to offer his services to the Emperor and to France. The adventures of M. de Laval are interesting in themselves, and, it is perhaps needless to say, are admirably told in that style of which Mr. Conan Doyle is a master. M. de Laval, like many other aristocrats of the time, has a villainous relative, the Uncle Bernac of the story, who, by siding with the revolution, has made himself the master of the Laval estates. Bernac has a beautiful daughter, whom he would fain see married to Louis de Laval in order that his tenure of the property might be thereby strengthened. But Louis de Laval has left behind him in England a girl whom he loves, and to whom he means to be true; whilst

Mademoiselle Bernac has fixed her affections upon a man whom her father hates, and whom he would willingly kill if he dared. It will thus be seen that it is into something like a hornet's nest that Louis de Laval is plunged on his return to his native country. Dangers beset him on every side, and if it were not that he had a quick wit, a dauntless courage, and skill with sword and pistol, it is to be feared that his story would never have been told. As it is, he fights his way through his various difficulties with determination and success, reaching in the end that haven of gratified desire which is dear to every reader of novels. But it is not this brilliant story of adventure that forms the best thing in "Uncle Bernac." That which moves us to the highest admiration is the manner in which Mr. Doyle has dealt with the Napoleonic scenes in the book. The first of contemporary writers to revive the popularity of historical romance, he has now gained a place in that particular field of the imagination in which his merits are recognised by all; but that he is growing steadily in power and in his art is proved by these Napoleonic scenes in "Uncle Bernac." If it cannot be said that we have a new reading of the complex and wonderful character of the great adventurer, we have at least a most vivid and convincing portrait of a man whose personality will long continue to occupy the curious interest of mankind. Mr. Conan Doyle, in short, has succeeded in realising Napoleon, and he makes him known to us as he really was, nor is he less successful in giving an air of life and realism to the minor characters on the historic stage, and to the bustling, crowded arena of the camp. It is not a small thing that we should have found amongst ourselves a writer who can thus interpret history for us and revive the faded memories of the past in the spirit, and with something of the genius, of Scott himself.

"Dick Donovan" has produced in "The Chronicles of Michael Danevitch" a much better detective story than any that we have previously had from his pen. Perhaps this is because he has selected the luxuriant field of Russian crime and intrigue as the subject of his stories, and has chosen as his hero one of those wonderful police-agents who are to be met with nowhere but at St. Petersburg. Be this as it may, he is at least to be congratulated upon having given us in this volume some excellent puzzles and mysteries, which he has worked out with more refinement and ingenuity that he displayed in his earlier detective stories. As a sequel to the Danevitch tales, he gives us a longer story, called "The Clue of the Dead Hand," which is exceptionally strong.

The author of "Yekl" is manifestly one of those writers who study life as it is before attempting to produce their impressions in the shape of fiction. There is nothing pleasant in the story of "Yekl," but it bears the unmistakable impress of truth, and is a study at once sordid and convincing of the particular phase of life with which it deals. The young Russian Jew, who has found his way to America and is living from hand to mouth as a tailor in a slop-shop, is about as unheroic a figure as could well be imagined; but he is intensely human, and his weaknesses, his egotism, his craft, his sly self-indulgence, are depicted so vividly that he becomes a very real man to the reader. When the young Jew has acquired a certain polish of civilisation in the wear and tear of the New York Ghetto, and is pluming himself upon being a full-blown American citizen, with all the rights appertaining to that condition, he is suddenly reminded of the pit from which he has been digged by the unexpected appearance of his wife upon the scene. He had been faithful in heart, at least, to the peasant girl he had left behind him in Europe so long as she remained at a distance, and in a sentimental fashion he had professed to himself to long for the moment when she and her boy should join him in his new home. But the apparition of the unfortunate Gitl in the garb of a Russian peasant, and without the faintest pretence even to such a polish as the New York Ghetto could afford, kills his love in a moment. To add to his embarrassment and misery, there is the fact that he had never mentioned the existence of this wife of his to his American acquaintances, and that, as a consequence, he had allowed himself to be involved in philanderings with at least two of the young Jewesses of the place. Poor Gitl quickly discovers the terrible change which has come over her husband since he left his native village to make a home for her in the New World. Of such things is the tragedy of life, and there can be as much real tragedy in the Ghetto as anywhere else. Mr. Cahan has drawn the picture of the misery of the ill-assorted pair with a pitiless hand, but he has steeped it in true human nature. Of course Yekl yields in the end to the blandishments of one of his former flames, and Gitl is deserted. But the girl is not the stuff of which martyrs are made, and she finds consolation of a sort elsewhere. There can be no doubt as to the great talent which is shown in this tale, which ought to ensure for its author a favourable reception when he next appeals to the public.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

No one can read "Limbo, and Other Essays" without recognising in Vernon Lee a sentimentalist, but a sentimentalist with ideas. She stands revealed, moreover, as a lover of nature and a critic of art, who knows Italy in the deep, intimate sense, and has fallen under the spell of its glorious skies and rich landscapes. The intoxication of the past is in these dreamy pages, as indeed might be expected in the handiwork of the author who gave us a certain artistic and romantic group of "Renaissance Studies." One of the most imaginative essays in the present volume is written in praise of Old Italian Gardens, whilst another, scarcely less suggestive of the tender grace of a day that is dead, is a dainty eulogy of Old Houses with their hint of the silenced emotion of departed generations. The Midsummer Magic of Tuscany brings sunshine as well as sentiment across the passing page, but the human appeal is never far to seek, or, for the matter of that, the subtle poetry of association. Sometimes Vernon Lee works herself into an ecstatic mood, and we confess we like her least when the note of rhapsody prevails. These essays please us best when they keep in touch with actual experience, and it is only fair to add that, with two or three exceptions, the mannered and artificial mood is not paramount. Hidden away in the book is a little homily on Leisure, suggested by the well-known picture of St. Jerome in his study dreaming over his books at an open window. Tradition has it that St. Jerome worked hard. There are mighty volumes which attest his polemical vigour, and in other directions his pen was not idle, but Vernon Lee persists in regarding him as the patron saint of Leisure—a scholar who knew how to loiter and to dream. Leisure, in the best sense of the word, is a lost quantity in modern life; for pleasure itself in these days is becoming a business, and is pursued with an energy which defeats the very mission of recreation. Dignity and calm are vanishing quantities, and we are all catching that feverish haste which makes it next to impossible to dream dreams and quite impossible to see visions. But let us turn to Vernon Lee as she takes up her parable:—"Life has been allowed to arrange itself, if such can be called arrangement, into an unstable jostling heap of interests—ours and other folks'; serious and vacuous, trusted to settle themselves according to the line of least resistance (that is, of most breakage!) and the survival of the toughest without our sympathy directing our choice. As the days of the year have become confused, hurried, and largely filled with worthless toil and unworthy trouble, so in a measure, alas! our souls. . . . The quick method, the rapid worker, the cheap object quickly

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* Limbo, and Other Essays. By Vernon Lee, Author of "Euphorion," etc. Frontispiece. London: Grant Richards.

American Men of Letters, 1660-1896. By Henrietta Christian Wright. 2 Vols. London: David Nutt.

The People's Life of Their Queen. By the Rev. E. J. Hardy, M.A., Author of "The Five Talents of Woman," etc. Illustrated. London, Paris and Melbourne: Cassell & Co., Ltd.

Life of Her Majesty the Queen. A Diamond Jubilee Memoir. Copiously Illustrated. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Pioneer Women in Victoria's Reign. By Edwin A. Pratt. London: George Newnes, Ltd.

The Story of the Chevalier Bayard. From the French by Edith Walford. New Edition.—Letters, Sentences, and Maxims. By Lord Chesterfield. With a Critical Essay by C. A. Sainte-Beuve. New Edition. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

replaced by a cheaper—these we honour; we want the last new thing, and have no time to get to love our properties, bodily and spiritual. 'Tis bad economy, we think, to weave such damask, linen and brocade as our fathers have left us; and perhaps this reason accounts for our love of bric-à-brac. We wish to buy associations ready-made, like that wealthy man of taste who sought to buy half a dozen old statues, properly battered and lichened by the centuries, to put in his brand-new garden." Self-assertion flourishes under such conditions, and much else that tends to rob human nature of its charm. "It is woeful to see so many fine qualities sacrificed to getting on, independent of actual necessity; getting on, no matter why, on the road to no matter what. And on that road, why bitterness and fury if another passes in front! Take up books of science, of history and criticism, let alone newspapers; half the space is taken up in explaining (or forestalling explanations) that the sage, hero, poet, artist said, did, or made the particular thing before some other sage, hero, poet, artist; and that what the other did or said or made was either a bungle or a plagiarism, or—worst of all—was something obvious." This explains, Vernon Lee thinks, why people who are born to be gentle, just, and well-mannered grow arrogant, waspish, and overbearing, and so lose that subtle fascination which was once their goodly heritage:—"Alas for charm! People are busy painting pictures, writing poems, and making music all the world over, and busy making money for the buying or hiring thereof. But as to that charm of character which is worth all the music and poetry and pictures put together, how the good common-sense generations do waste it!" There is much to be said for the view that charm is closely allied to leisure, and is, indeed, its delicate and capricious foster-child. Solitude has been called the mother-country of the strong, and leisure—it is leagues removed from indolence—preserves the most sensitive tendrils of life in beauty, and shields existence from becoming a mere scramble for place or power, or prevents its energies from being squandered in the ignoble quest of excitement.

It is not to Mrs. Wright's "American Men of Letters, 1660-1896" that we would direct the student in search of a manual of reference on the literature of the New World. We would rather bid him consult the much more critical pages of Richardson or Nichol. The book before us, though it extends to two volumes, can scarcely be described as in any sense critical or interpretative. It deals almost exclusively with the biographical aspects of literature, and even in that respect is hardly satisfactory. What we get is brisk but shallow fluency—a cheap and easy statement of facts unrelieved to any appreciable extent by illuminating comments. It was said long ago, with much truth and by way of apology for the meagre achievements in literature of the early colonists, that they had to conquer nature before admiring it, and had small time to devote to the analysis of character and motive. "The cares of existence beset them to the exclusion of its embellishments. While Dryden, Pope, and Addison were polishing stanzas and adding grace to English prose, they were felling trees, navigating rivers, and fertilising valleys. The people of the United States have had to act their Iliad, and they have not had time to sing it." The first of these volumes contains appreciations of Washington Irving, Fenimore Cooper, Bancroft, Emerson, Motley, and Hawthorne, to take what are perhaps the most representative names in prose; it likewise gives picturesque sketches of poets like Poe, Longfellow, Whittier, and Lowell. It would be well if it had stopped there, for the companion volume only renders conspicuous what we might almost call the arrested development in literary achievement of the later decades of the present century. Bret Harte and Mark Twain are all very well in their way, but they do not redeem the closing volume of this slight and, at the same time, prolix survey from mediocrity. Emerson used to tell his countrymen that the American eagle was noble enough, but that it was necessary for them to be on their guard against the Transatlantic peacock; and, if the truth must be spoken, that sorry bird flaunts his cheap feathers in these pages.

The approaching national rejoicings are bringing into existence a number of cheap and more or less attractive gift-books. We have received, amongst other books of the kind, "The People's Life of their Queen," by the Rev. E. J. Hardy. It proves to be a well-written and, indeed, vivid description of the great events of Her Majesty's reign and the personal characteristics of the sovereign. The volume is lavishly illustrated; and as its price is only sixpence, it is certain to have what it assuredly merits—an extremely wide sale. Another "Life of Her Majesty the Queen" has also reached us, which describes with lucidity and care the facts and forces which have shaped an illustrious and beneficent career. There are many illustrations in this volume also, and not the least interesting of them are portraits of sovereigns and statesmen, as well as members, past and present, of the Royal House. We have also received a book descriptive of "Pioneer Women in Victoria's Reign." It seeks to give a summary of new departures which women have made in the promotion of education, emigration, poor-law reform, nursing, the care of young girls, as well as in various walks of practical philanthropy. It is written with knowledge and restraint; and, though the style is a little dull, the volume contains a number of carefully selected and explicit acts which bear more or less closely on the social evolution which has gone forward in the Queen's reign.

Messrs. Sampson Low have just brought out a remarkably neat and singularly cheap reissue of "The Story of the Chevalier Bayard," from the French of De Berville. This gallant soldier of France followed the fortunes in war of Charles VIII. and Louis XII., and was so completely "sans peur et sans reproche" that he has been recognised throughout Europe as almost the "realised ideal" of the noblest aspects of chivalry. The present edition is enriched with notes and an historical introduction. The same publishers send us a companion volume of the "Bayard Series," "The Letters and Maxims of Lord Chesterfield," and the value of the original text, with its epigrammatic vigour and bleak cynicism, is enhanced by the appearance side by side with it of Sainte-Beuve's appreciation. The great critic regarded Chesterfield as a "French wit" who had been born on the wrong side of the English Channel. Yet even Sainte-Beuve admitted that the inexplicable touch of imagination and colour which pervades Lord Chesterfield's nonchalant literary and social judgments was due to the English blood which ran in his veins.

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